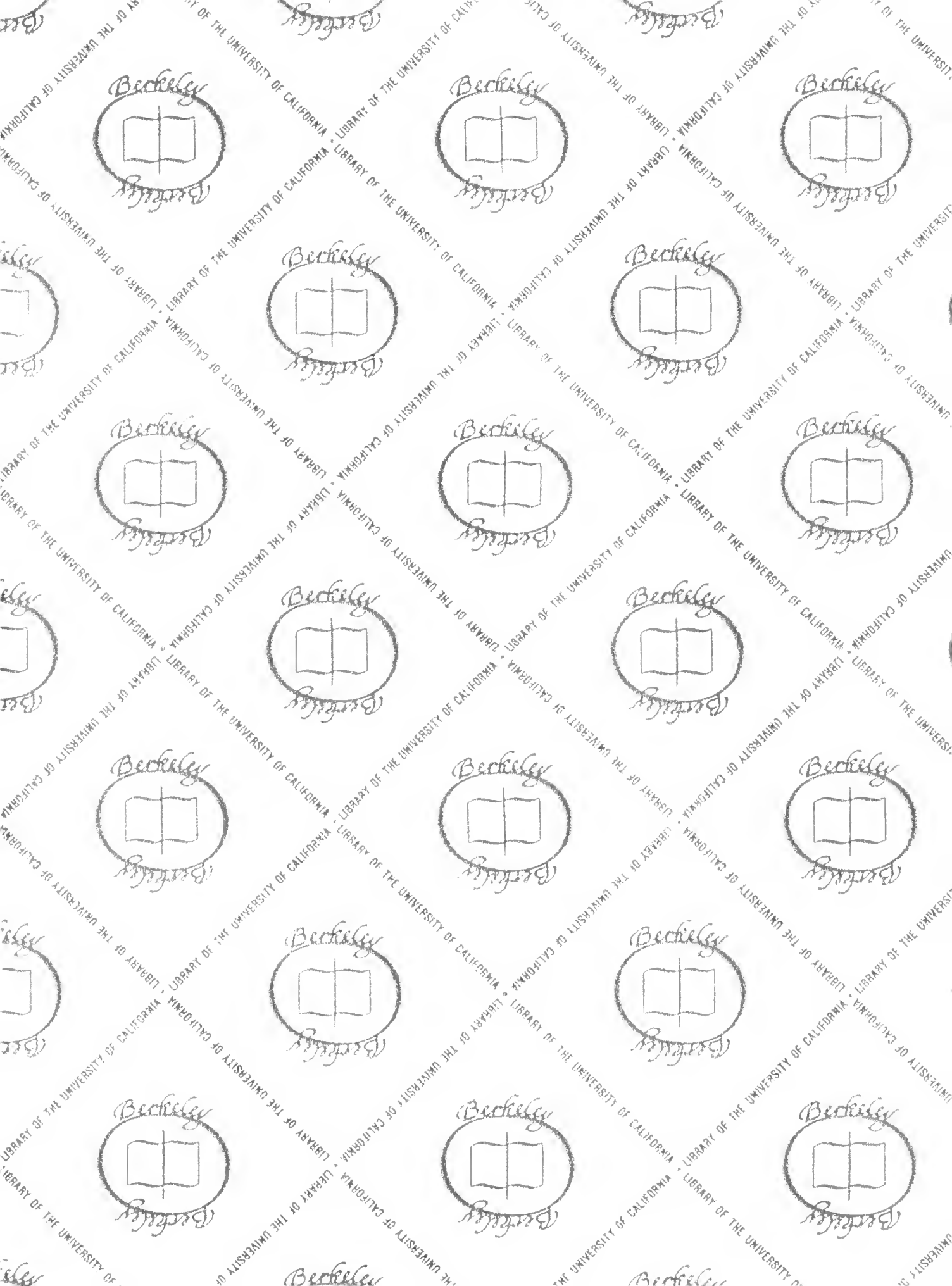


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Governmental History Documentation Project
Goodwin Knight/Edmund Brown, Sr., Era

Frederick G. Dutton

DEMOCRATIC CAMPAIGNS AND CONTROVERSIES, 1954-1966

An Interview Conducted by
Amelia R. Fry
1977-1978

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FREDERICK G. DUTTON

TABLE OF CONTENTS -- Frederick G. Dutton

PREFACE	i
INTERVIEW HISTORY	viii
I EDUCATION, EARLY CAREER, AND POLITICAL ROOTS	1
Family Background and Schooling	1
Edward Dutton	9
The Limits of Politics and Government	11
College and World War II Experiences	14
Meeting Pat Brown and Adlai Stevenson	23
II ADLAI STEVENSON'S BID FOR THE PRESIDENCY, 1956	28
Dutton is Campaign Coordinator for Southern California	28
The End of Print Politics	31
Thoughts on Stevenson	33
Stevenson Addresses the California Democratic Council	35
Issue Papers	38
Politics in Black Communities	39
Brown's Decision Not to Run for U.S. Senate	41
Eclecticism and Non-Ideological Politics	44
Estes Kefauver	45
The Coming of Media Politics	46
Fundraising for Stevenson	48
Paul Ziffren	51
Thoughts on Party Offices	52
Self Evaluation: Dutton's Eight-Year Rise	54
Brown and Campaign Mechanics	56
Civil Rights and the 1956 Convention	57
The McGovern Commission	61
Women in Politics	62
Choosing a Vice President	63
Relations with John F. Kennedy	65
Anti-Catholic Sentiment in the California Delegation	66
Factionalism: Hallmark of California Politics	67
Dick Tuck's Bogus Tickets	69
Dollars for Democrats	70
Comments on Pat Brown, Clair Engle, and George Miller, Jr.	71
Press Coverage and Campaign Issues	74
Effect of the Campaign on Pat Brown's Career	79

III	THE CALIFORNIA GUBERNATORIAL CAMPAIGN, 1958	81
	The Political Backdrop: Decades of Nonpartisanship	81
	Responding to Republican Disarray	83
	Early Differences Between Brown and Unruh	85
	California Politics: Factions and Ego Massages	86
	Party Politics and Elective Politics: A Distinction	88
	North-South Division in California	90
	Support From Blacks	92
	The "Loner" Campaign	92
	Political Process and Governmental Process	94
	Other Statewide Candidates: Engle and Cranston	96
	Thoughts on the Oil Industry	98
	A Trade-off for the California Water Plan	101
	George Miller, Jr. and Hugh Burns	105
	Tom Lynch as Candidate	106
	Pat Brown and Fred Dutton: The Working Relationship	107
	Bernice Brown and the Decision to Run in 1958	108
	More on Dutton and Brown	113
	Brown and Earl Warren: A Critique of Two Governorships	115
	The Chessman Case	116
	Bill Knowland and the Big Switch	124
	Walter Reuther	125
	Nixon's Stance in 1958	125
	Importance of a Central Campaign Strategy	127
	Howard Ahmanson and the Savings and Loan Industry	129
	A Career Pattern: Running as the Overwhelming Candidate	131
	Development of the Media Event	132
	Speechwriting Strategies	133
IV	THE CALIFORNIA GUBERNATORIAL CAMPAIGN, 1966	136
	A Critique of the Later Brown Administration	136
	Thoughts on Power, Politics, and the Social Good	143
	Unrest at Berkeley	145
	Brown's Response to the Vietnam War	146
	Dissension in the Democratic Party	151
	L.A. County DA's Office and the Movie Industry	154
	Dutton's Decision to Join the Campaign	156
	Contradictory Views of Reagan	158
	No Clear, Simple Focus	160
	PR Firms in Politics: Their Usefulness and Limitations	162
	"A Plane in a Thunderstorm"	164
	Reagan as a Campaign Target	168
	TAPE GUIDE	170
	APPENDIX A -- 1958 Campaign Materials	171
	APPENDIX B -- Brief Account of Dutton Activities After 1966	174
	INDEX	177

PREFACE

Covering the years 1953 to 1966, the Goodwin Knight-Edmund G. "Pat" Brown, Sr., Oral History Series is the second phase of the Governmental History Documentation Project begun by the Regional Oral History Office in 1969. That year inaugurated the Earl Warren Era Oral History Project, which produced interviews with Earl Warren and other persons prominent in politics, criminal justice, government administration, and legislation during Warren's California era, 1925 to 1953.

The Knight-Brown series of interviews carries forward the earlier inquiry into the general topics of: the nature of the governor's office, its relationships with the legislature and with its own executive departments, biographical data about Governors Knight and Brown and other leaders of the period, and methods of coping with the rapid social and economic changes of the state. Key issues documented for 1953-1966 were: the rise and decline of the Democratic party, the impact of the California Water Plan, the upheaval of the Vietnam War escalation, the capital punishment controversy, election law changes, new political techniques forced by television and increased activism, reorganization of the executive branch, the growth of federal programs in California, and the rising awareness of minority groups. From a wider view across the twentieth century, the Knight-Brown period marks the final era of California's Progressive period, which was ushered in by Governor Hiram Johnson in 1910 and which provided for both parties the determining outlines of government organization and political strategy until 1966.

The Warren Era political files, which interviewers had developed cooperatively to provide a systematic background for questions, were updated by the staff to the year 1966 with only a handful of new topics added to the original ninety-one. An effort was made to record in greater detail those more significant events and trends by selecting key participants who represent diverse points of view. Most were queried on a limited number of topics with which they were personally connected; a few narrators who possessed unusual breadth of experience were asked to discuss a multiplicity of subjects. Although the time frame of the series ends at the November 1966 election, when possible the interviews trace events on through that date in order to provide a logical baseline for continuing study of succeeding administrations. Similarly, some narrators whose experience includes the Warren years were questioned on that earlier era as well as the Knight-Brown period.

The present series has been financed by grants from the California State Legislature through the California Heritage Preservation Commission and the office of the Secretary of State, and by some individual donations. Portions of several memoirs were funded partly by the California Women in Politics Project under a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, including a matching grant from the Rockefeller Foundation; the two projects were produced concurrently in this office, a joint effort made feasible by overlap of narrators, topics, and staff expertise.

The Regional Oral History Office was established to tape record autobiographical interviews with persons significant in the history of California and the West. The Office is under the administrative direction of James D. Hart, Director of The Bancroft Library, and Willa Baum, head of the Office.

Amelia R. Fry, Project Director
Gabrielle Morris, Project Coordinator

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Project Interviewers

Malca Chall
Amelia R. Fry
Gabrielle Morris
James Rowland
Sarah Sharp
Julie Shearer

Special Interviewers

Eleanor Glaser
Harriet Nathan
Suzanne Riess
Miriam Feingold Stein
Ruth Teiser

*Deceased during the term of the project.

GOODWIN KNIGHT-EDMUND BROWN, SR. ERA ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
(California, 1953-1966)

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- Leary, Mary Ellen, *A Journalist's Perspective: Government and Politics in California and the Bay Area*. 1981.
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Sloss, Nancy

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Bonderson, Paul R., *Executive Officer, Regional and State Water Pollution and Water Quality Control Boards, 1950-1966.*

INTERVIEW HISTORY

The phases of Fred Dutton's life seem to leap logically from one significant historical axis to the next; from campaigns of Governor Edmund G. "Pat" Brown to those of President John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, and Hubert Humphrey; from Sacramento bureaucracy to the University of California Board of Regents; from Los Angeles and New York to Saudi Arabia. Through it all, he has functioned as ideas incarnate, and the reason for this interview was to capture an "idea man" in motion inside the pressures of practical politics. Governor Pat Brown always reached out for this type of person to complement those around him who functioned more in terms of organization and program. For the purposes of this project, this narration is focussed on the years when Pat Brown was governor, 1958-1966. Within those confines project advisors and commentators agree that Dutton was among the three on whom Brown leaned most heavily during the early years of his governorship. Observers do not always agree on the identity of the other two: Dutton himself names Phil Gibson and Pat's wife Bernice; some would add Tom Lynch and Hale Champion. But Dutton is always named.

At the time of our taping Dutton was a relatively young man at the peak of his career--or many careers. In addition to Dutton's work for Pat Brown, he had practiced law in southern California and, finding it boring, he had led Adlai Stevenson's southern California race in 1956. He had been a member of the White House staff of John Kennedy and Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Relations (1962-1964). In 1964 he had been the executive director of the platform committee of the Democratic National Convention. From 1962 to 1976 he was a Regent of the University of California. During this period he had brought together some of his ideas in a book, Changing Sources of Power, American Politics in the 1970s,* and was in charge of Robert Kennedy's campaign for president. Since 1973 he has been practicing law in Washington, D.C., this time presumably escaping boredom because his chief client is Saudi Arabia.

Dutton had also been the first in charge of an oral history project for John Kennedy after his assassination, and either because of or in spite of that experience, he readily agreed to this taping even though scheduling obviously would be difficult. Every session was scheduled first in California at the time of a Regents' meeting, but on one occasion the interviewee had an unavoidable conflict, and at other times he was totally occupied while on the West Coast either with university matters or with the arrival of Prince Bandar from Saudi Arabia, whereupon Dutton became an irreplaceable member of that entourage. All of our recording sessions, as well as a pre-recording conference, took place in his

*Frederick G. Dutton, Changing Sources of Power, American Politics in the 1970s (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971).

offices at 1140 Connecticut Avenue in Washington.

We began planning the outline in 1977 with pages from the chronology that had been developed in our office in Berkeley, but in Dutton's case it did not contribute a great deal; he could recall dates, people, and sequences quite sufficiently, for this was going to be an essay-type interview, so to speak, and the time line primarily furnished the hooks on which to hang ideas.

Our taping began on June 13, 1977. The secretary was asked to hold all calls and, except for occasional power drilling from construction next door, the office was quiet. Our next meeting, on April 15, 1978, was even more peaceful. Dutton had heroically come into his office on a Saturday at 8:30 a.m. after a week of traversing the continent with the Prince and other Saudi oil industry officials. Dutton was relaxed, in a sport shirt, laughing with good humor at the bad luck factors and at his own political education with Adlai Stevenson in 1956. His usual style was intensified but easier: Talking rapidly with conceptualizations tumbling out back-to-back, never failing to respond fully to a question, expanding, analyzing, then tying it up with a tenet of the political process. His own experience as interviewer and interviewee in the Kennedy oral history project tempts one to theorize that this had helped to make him an intent, responsive narrator. But these sessions were actually a slice of the Dutton as he was, a personality of unique value to governors, presidents, and princes.

In all sessions he was open to questions, articulate, candid, willing to pursue a topic in more depth if so requested. He also included talk on some personal aspects of his growing up and development, even though he could be considered to be too young to risk such vulnerability. But his own persona is simply one part of the past landscape over which his keen eye played, selecting and synthesizing. As he talked, he alternately leaned back in his chair, then lurched forward to doodle on a note pad, perhaps gathering up thoughts via his fingers, if one subscribes to the Saul Steinberg view of doodling as "the brooding of the hand."

Although an interviewer in oral history must take care not to evaluate lest the researcher coming along later read the transcript with skewed vision, there is one characteristic that struck me: he possesses still that Nebraska-Progressive root of idealism, but he is at the same time unideological. The systems which he cultured and grew out of the soil of his political plantations are original. If one reads Dutton with firm squares in mind marked "liberal Democrat," or "civil libertarian," one will fit Dutton in only part of the time. Other Democrats had difficulty lining up his complex analysis and strategies with their expectations. At the end of the session about the 1958 campaign, Dutton says as much: "What they didn't like about either Pat or me, was that we exercised so much restraint. The Phil Burtons and everybody else like that, they wanted us to go all out--FEPC and everything...[but] we were minimally ideological." The point was to show that Pat Brown was a good human being. It was "a highly disciplined campaign--to the frustration of a lot of active Democrats... It was won by knowing how much to hold back." Unlike many of his contemporaries, Dutton also was never in that amalgam of Democratic party leaders and California Democratic Council chiefs self-dubbed The Two-Twelve Gang

(from their office address on Sutter Street in San Francisco), nor was he ever active in the burgeoning CDC. He views the political process in terms of abstract forces--"energy" exchanges and networks of connections as tangled as those in southern California.

After our last interview on October 19, 1978, we had planned another session to cover the man Dutton in addition to Governor Brown. But realities of budget and time intervened. We could not record Dutton's academic experiences, (apart from his pacifist dilemma in World War II) nor get the story of the campaigns of Bobby Kennedy, Hubert Humphrey, Arthur Goldberg (in New York), and Norton Simon (in California), nor his tenure on the board of regents during the rocky years of student strife and Reagan cut-backs. Nor could we discover all that Dutton did in his legal work on the First Amendment, nor the part his legal counselor role played in the Saudi leadership at a time when the general public lost its innocence about infinite petroleum resources. All such subjects dissolved as funding to continue the project disappeared. However, after Dutton reviewed the transcript for errors and ambiguities, he did write a brief outline of his life since 1966, which is appended as an epilogue. There is enough there for another volume of oral history; in addition he probably yet has a few more careers ahead of him.

Amelia R. Fry
Interviewer-Editor

20 August 1981
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I EDUCATION, EARLY CAREER, AND POLITICAL ROOTS

[Interview 1: June 13, 1977]##

Family Background and Schooling

Dutton: I come from a family in which both parents were college-educated. My father was a doctor. He went to the University of Wisconsin and then Northwestern Medical School. My mother went to Colorado College, a small women's college in Colorado Springs, and then the University of Nebraska, though she left to marry my father in her senior year. I was born in a small town in Colorado, Julesburg, population 1,300. My father was a country doctor. When I was six, we moved to the San Francisco Bay Area in the summer of 1929.

The civic interest and the schools in small towns were not good enough according to my father, which suggests an educational bias from way back. I went to public schools in Burlingame and San Mateo through the sixth grade, then a boys' school near Los Gatos called Montezuma, which is no longer there. My father practiced medicine in San Francisco. My mother was an articulate, intellectually-active but family-oriented housewife. My family background is rational, WASP, education oriented, politics three times a day over meals. My father was a very conservative, but individualistic Republican, my mother was a New Deal Democrat. [laughter]

Fry: That must have been some political conversation!

Dutton: I sort of grew up on the San Francisco Chronicle, which was a much better paper in those days. I had an interest in public affairs, politics, and education from the time I was fairly small. When I

##This symbol indicates that a tape or a segment of a tape has begun or ended. For a guide to the tapes see page 170.

Dutton: finished high school in 1941--I had finished at the San Mateo public high school--I entered the University of California, Berkeley, in the autumn of that year. I went there till 1943.

The war, of course, had started in December of 1941. I had taken ROTC. Unlike a lot of people, I was not particularly anxious to get into the military. I went to school straight around from the fall of '41 to the summer of '43, because I knew sooner or later I'd have to go. Finally I went into the military in June of 1943. I went through basic training at Camp Roberts and did regular military service. I was sent a few months after basic training to officer candidate school for the infantry in Fort Benning, Georgia. Then, after brief training in Oklahoma in the field, I was shipped overseas.

I saw a little bit of combat in France. I ended up a German prisoner of war. I'd been hit by a mortar shell. That was early January of 1945, so I spent only a few months in the POW hospital and camp. I was shipped back to the states and went back to Berkeley at the start of 1946 to finish up.

Fry: All right. Breathe. First of all, what are your parents' names?

Dutton: My father was Dr. Frederick G. Dutton, Sr. My mother was Lucy Elizabeth Parker Dutton. My father was from Green Bay, Wisconsin, my mother from Julesburg, Colorado. My father went to Colorado after medical service in World War I, then they moved to San Francisco in 1929. They lived in San Francisco until 1943-'44. Then my father had health problems, so they moved to southern California. He practiced medicine in Alhambra, plus a Long Beach office and later Pasadena and that area, from 1944 until he died in 1973.

Fry: Your father moved down where there were a lot of others of his political persuasion.

Dutton: Yes, although he was very old fashioned, rather a utopian idealist in many ways, too independent for orthodox Republicanism of that period. He increasingly found himself uncomfortable with the Republican party, but he could never really admit that he had moved over to the Democrats. I used to say he only voted for those Democratic candidates whom I was campaign manager for, like Pat Brown and the Kennedys. He would come over out of loyalty to his son.

I would have to say that he believed in a society of humane relationships--and of a simpler, more direct society, nineteenth century-like. He found organizational intrusion, first by government and later on by unions and then later on by medical societies and so forth, uncomfortable. In later years he became very critical, for example, of his fellow doctors. He thought modern medicine became a money-making rat race.

Dutton: Here again, though, you've got to put him in the context of his early practice in a small town where he was the only doctor for about sixty miles, the old fashioned kind. There was no other doctor in northeastern Colorado, which is where he was practicing medicine when I was born in Julesburg, Colorado. He did a lot of delivering babies, small operations, and so forth out in farm houses in the area. There were no hospitals then or now. I think he found human society more comfortable in that kind of a context. We've all become more complex and interdependent now. He always said his country medical work was the best time of his life. Yet he moved to San Francisco for a better setting for his sons to grow up. That suggests his other-directed, personal priorities.

Fry: How did he feel about Frank Norris?

Dutton: Actually, Senator Norris came from a town of around 10,000 about a hundred and fifty miles southeast of Julesburg--McCook, Nebraska. Frank Norris would have been his ideal, somebody like that. My father had grown up in Wisconsin in the 1890s and early 1900s. Robert M. LaFollette was very much his ideal, although had an abiding detachment about politicians.

Fry: The Progressive type of Republican.

Dutton: Yes, he was the Progressive type of Republican. Yet the Progressives really introduced much of what we now call governmental regulation in this country. When he began to see that on a heavier scale thirty or forty years later, he decided that the thing had gone too far. It's like an awful lot of people who were New Deal Democrats thirty or forty years ago are now beginning to wonder whether or not the liberal critique of capitalism has really done that well.

Fry: And whether there is a bureaucratic answer.

Dutton: Whether there is a bureaucratic answer to human, social problems.

Fry: I was going to say, he would have agreed with Mario Savio.

Dutton: No, but I found much appealing in some of that outlook. [laughter] I think Savio's group went about it, in some respects, the wrong way. To jump to Berkeley in the early and mid-sixties, the University was rapidly expanding its enrollment, registration lines were incredible, we used handout computer cards in lieu of names, and the individual student was lost sight of in reachings for grandiosity by the administration, and the rebellion was vaguely, at an offbeat level, like in the early Industrial Revolution--there was an awful lot of legitimacy to the complaints.

Fry: It sounds like your father was away from home a lot because of his practice and that maybe your mother's politics had more influence on you.

Dutton: Yes, my father did work long hours and all that. My mother was an aggressive advocate and had no hesitation. She was intelligent, well read, articulate, yet more a talker than a 'do-er.' She was not a feminist advocate, but argued for social reform without regard to sex roles--in the context of the 1930s. I grew up as an almost uncritical Democrat for many years. I'm not now. I'm a Democrat, but I'm a lot more critical. I started the first grade not long before Franklin Roosevelt was elected. As an early adolescent, I was a heavy reader. The social ferment and the economic difficulties of the 1930s were pervasive and I think impressionable on any young person who was at all aware of what was going on. Then from another, more cynical viewpoint, which a young person would not be aware of, they were the 'ins.' The Roosevelts were attractive and in the papers. So I think it was more an environmental conditioning to a very great extent. That is not often enough taken into account in considering the political, social, ideological roots of people.

Fry: You had never known another president.

Dutton: Yes, from the time I was first aware of elections, public processes, and life beyond the family or the neighborhood, Roosevelt and the New Deal and the Democrats were overwhelmingly dominant.

Fry: What else was there?

Dutton: Exactly. Eisenhower was the first Republican president in my life. I think that Roosevelt and the New Deal determined an awful lot of the original political orientation and perceptions in this situation.

I should say that in my mother's background, her father (a college drop-out from Westminster, Missouri) was a cattle rancher near this little town, had eleven children, then adopted one. His wife, my maternal grandmother, was a lovely, shy little woman from a Missouri, hill-billy background, with great inner strength; they homesteaded about 1899 in a dug-out house, got rich ranching in World War I, then went broke in the farm depression of the 1920s and '30s.

My grandfather was chairman of the Democratic central committee and had started the local newspaper to make sure there was a Democratic paper. I had an uncle who was later the county clerk of the county. No big deal on one hand, but in a rural area that was on the edge of the dust bowl, for example, in the 1930s, there was tremendous activism on the Democratic side. The truth of the matter is--I realize now; I didn't realize then--that they were probably very conservative, rigid Democrats by present social values and not my particular brand. But I was absorbing the political Democratic label to a considerable extent.

Fry: Who later could be characterized as Eisenhower Democrats.

Dutton: Yes, exactly. They were Democrats. They were Missouri, or rather, Southern (originally Virginia) Democrats, which makes them conservative. It was an almost all-white society in this little town. I guess we all tend to be, unless we really fight it, in the political orientation that comes from when we're fairly young, or at least by fifteen to twenty-five. Then we marginally change, but not a great deal despite self perceptions of 'growth.'

I think there's a healthy re-examination going on among a lot of people in this country right now. I don't think we know where we're going, but we're dissatisfied with the assumptions of the last thirty or forty, or fifty years.

This early conditioning was all Democratic, with a considerable amount of political activism within my mother's family, even though it was a small town. Then you take the involvement in arguing or discussing politics at every meal among parents and the two sons. It was in good spirits. It was not strident. They and my brother were understated individuals. I was deeply immersed in political discussion. I never really had any intention of getting into it, but I can remember writing articles for school newspapers and letters home about politics. I was fairly vociferous whenever state or national elections would come around, which I guess is what finally led to the involvement with Pat Brown.

Fry: You said that you read a lot through school and did outside reading. What were you reading?

Dutton: We were strictly middle class, let me say. But my father always believed it was better to do a lot of reading in the summer than jobs. I had worked in a grocery store in the thirties in a silly, minor way, errand boy. But my first real job was in a gas station in San Mateo when I was a sophomore or junior in high school. My father really was not for that at all. He thought it was much more important to stay home and read on evenings and weekends and summers. Books--I can't remember particularly. They were heavy on biography, history. One specific group was the Lanny Budd 'potboiler' series that Upton Sinclair was putting out at that time, which mixed a little national politics and sex and contemporary cultural things, Wilson to World War II. I was heavy into poetry for several years (Sandburg, then Edna St. Vincent Millay, Robinson Jeffers, Yeats, etc.) and later plays, especially contemporary. I have written lots of not-very-good poetry and several terrible one-act plays, plus my two political books--and endless memos.

My early emphasis however, was very much on turning in on the family, doing a lot of reading. I'd been a good student--not a great student, but quite a good student. I had always been very active in student affairs through school. At the boys school that I went to down in Los Gatos for six years, there were six student body jobs, and I held all six of them.

Fry: I wondered if you were in politics there.

Dutton: Yes. There were three or four of us who were dissatisfied with the little school newspaper, so we started a competing one. I was the editor. About two years later, they got us to agree to run the school paper so there wouldn't be a competing one because we were too much of a critic of the teachers, sports program, and things like that. [laughter]

Fry: You were co-opted.

Dutton: Yes.

Fry: What was the name of your boys school?

Dutton: Montezuma School for Boys. My father had decided, I think when I was to start the seventh grade, that he wanted to do some retraining and research. He originally was going to do it for one year, partly at the University of California, San Francisco, and partly at Stanford Medical School, then in San Francisco. He was going to re-educate himself to some extent or bring himself up to date on medical research. He had done that once in the 1920s. It was an interesting phenomenon. He had a small, country medical practice and no problems, as far as I can tell, with his marriage or anything like that. But he ups and goes over to Vienna for several months to take intensive medical retraining about twelve years out of medical school. He thought that he should bring himself up to date on the latest developments. Then he goes back to this little town and stays there for another couple of years.

When I was in the sixth grade, he decided he needed six to twelve months to really go back and get up to date. He was not what I would call an intellectual man. He was in general medical practice for a long, long time. I think he liked that best. And yet, as I say, these two episodes of going back for re-schooling are interesting in terms of what it suggests about him. In any event, during what was going to be his year of retraining, my folks were going to live in San Francisco rather than down the Peninsula. So it was decided that my brother and I should go to this private school for a year. We went and we liked it so well that we then stayed six years in all. I really liked it. It was great.

It was all boys, but it was out in the hills of Los Gatos, which is a beautiful location--a lake, redwoods, fruit trees, high in the Santa Cruz Mountains. There were only about 130 of us. We played football, basketball, track, tennis, swimming. You could be in everything. Classes were three or four people. There was a lot of individual tutorial attention. It was a rather experimental, slightly progressive place at the time, nondenominational, not military. We flourished there and talked our folks into letting

Dutton: us stay one more year. We worked part-time (table waiting, switchboard, etc.) to help meet the tuition. The period was still the 1930s. I finally ended up staying six years in all and left at the end of my junior year.

To get back to the political aspect, before World War II in California there was a high school civics organization--semi-state-wide, not large--called the Junior Statesmen of America, a pretentious title. I had gotten into that, and that got me traveling around a little bit to weekend discussion, not debate, meetings. It was in that period that I discovered girls and decided I didn't want to go to an all-boys school. [laughter] So we went back to San Mateo High.

To stay on the political interests, for example, I ran statewide for what was called the governor of this high school civics organization, the top person. I ran with somebody from Southern California for lieutenant governor, so we sort of had a statewide ticket. My lieutenant governor running mate was Frank Mankiewicz. Frank and I have known each other since high school.

Fry: Frank and I are good friends too.

Dutton: Frank went to Beverly Hills or Hollywood High then, and I was at this school up north. We met at some meeting. When the annual elections came up at the end of our sophomore year, Frank decided to run for lieutenant governor. I was going to run for governor, so we paired up and ran together against two seniors.

Fry: Did you say you won?

Dutton: Yes, we won. The organization still goes on. I haven't paid any attention to it since then, but they meet and talk and pass resolutions. Lots of sound and fury, and nothing comes of it.

Frank and I have met each other off and on since then in California, after he ran for the state assembly and placed third of three, and then when he came back to Washington with the Peace Corps and I was on the White House staff; then in the Robert Kennedy and McGovern campaigns; and currently in Washington where he's head of the National Public Radio headquarters. Then we lived a block from each other in Washington for about five years. So we've known each other a long, long time.

Fry: There are some other pick-ups here that I want to get. Usually in those small mid-western towns the church played a very important part. I wondered if it had for you.

Dutton: No, it did not. Interesting--and why, I'm not sure. I used to go back to this little town, until I was through law school, and visit relatives. The Methodist-Congregational church was overwhelmingly

Dutton: dominant. Julesburg wasn't Baptist. There was a small Catholic church. But among the WASPs the Catholics, I think, were a little bit suspect. I don't know why. I went to Sunday school. Later I won a Bible when we were in San Mateo, when I was about eleven or twelve for not missing a Sunday service.

To go back to my father a little bit, his mother had been Roman Catholic. She was Irish, strong-willed, bright, independent. She attended one or two Republican national conventions in her sixties after her husband died; and she swore by the Chicago Tribune at that stage of her life. Her parents had come over from Ireland and lived around Albany, New York, then Green Bay, Wisconsin, where her father was a boat captain. My father's mother had married a high-school educated Protestant from Vermont who worked (as a clerk and later an officer) for a small railroad in Wisconsin. I gather secondhand--and I'm not sure this is accurate--that there had been some marriage problems over religion or at least that was the outward form of the difficulty. She finally left the Catholic church and joined the Episcopal church, the closest one, apparently to smooth the marriage and her life. In any event, my father was never terribly religious in a formal sense. He was what I would describe as a quiet, shy, understated man deeply dedicated to medicine, his wife and sons, with no demonstrable religious involvement at all. I've often wondered whether part of that was this vague problem between his mother and father, or his mother leaving the Catholic church.

I also tend to look at the outside environment in situations like this. In the 1890s and around 1910 in this country there was a tremendous critique of religion culminating later in books such as Sinclair Lewis's Elmer Gantry. My father had partly worked his way through the University of Wisconsin. It was then particularly the college communities that thought that religion was too traditional in a time of accelerating social change and secularization throughout Western society.

In any event, he tended to look with great suspicion on the churches. The result was that while I was sent to Sunday school as a cultural experience, it never really took. I can't say at any time that organized, orthodox religion has been a terribly profound dimension for me. Anthropology, archeology, history, psychology and experience have been my portals, or as close as I yet come to that dimension. My father was what I would call a highly ethical individual, and I'm not trying to put him in the best light because he's my father. But his emphasis was on ethics rather than religious faith. He saw the organized church doing some of both, but mixing the two up badly. Here again, this Puritan work ethic, restrained--I guess you could say sexually repressed--individual coming out highly rationalistic at the end or the various processes he's unconsciously working on. Religion was just not his bag in that kind of

Dutton: a semi-intellectual milieu. One of my last recollections is of him sitting in his garage in Pasadena, at 81 and retired, re-reading Mark Twain's Letters from the Earth (or approximately with that title).

Edward Dutton

Fry: What about other members of your family?

Dutton: I had only one brother, no sisters. My brother is Edward Dutton, born in Julesburg, Colorado, same educational experience as me, one year younger. He started Berkeley in the fall of 1942. I joined a fraternity out of my mother's pressure to do so. I was resistant. I thought I wouldn't, and it was one of my submissions to parental insistence that I never was very pleased with, but I did it at the time. Ed followed me there.

Fry: What did you finally join?

Dutton: Delta Tau Delta, which is way up on Hillcrest. I finally was president of the house. Being the pseudo-reformist that I am, I immediately set out on a crusade to abolish Hell Week, which was very big in fraternities in those days. [laughter]

Fry: It's a wonder they didn't lynch you right then.

Dutton: In any event, to go back to my brother, I was in the fraternity house in the beginning of the fall of 1942. I had worked in the Kaiser ship yard in South San Francisco because of the war. That summer for six weeks I had gone to summer school to try to speed up the educational process. My brother came. He had not been as good a student as I. He was somewhat more gregarious and outgoing. He stayed a whole year at the fraternity house and went to classes and so forth. At the end of the year my father and I realized for the first time that Ed had never registered. He just stayed at school for a year. Then he went in the army as an enlisted man in the medical corps, came back, went to Berkeley, got good grades.

After graduating from Berkeley, he went to Columbia Graduate School of Social Welfare, went to work in New York, then outside Detroit, then back to the Bay Area, taught at Fresno State and also worked with one of the foundations in San Francisco on migrant labor. He was one of the advisors to Cesar Chavez for a while. He taught courses at Berkeley and went on the faculty of Fresno State. He was finally in line for tenure, but because of my attacks on (Governor) Reagan and my brother's association with Cesar Chavez, he was denied tenure. Now he's a tenured professor at the University of Kansas.

Fry: That's really interesting.

Dutton: Yes, it's an interesting curlicue. It was a very big issue in the Fresno and the California papers about 1968 or 1969. There were about four or five faculty members who were denied tenure. I can't say that my brother was a radical, but without any question he was very aggressive about field workers and organizing the field workers.

Fry: At Fresno, especially.

Dutton: Fresno accepted it. He had gotten quite active in trying to integrate field workers into the power structure, as he likes to put it, there. Reagan reached in and directed the president of Fresno State-- newspaper clippings would be more accurate on this than I am. It became quite a political issue. Whoever was the president of Fresno State at that time went with the governor, which probably had to do with taking into account his overall budget and organizational priorities.

In any event, I was on the University of California Board of Regents. I had been attacking Reagan vigorously that period, on a number of issues. My brother had been very active with Cesar Chavez. Anyway, when my brother was denied tenure, the University of Kansas offered him a job. He has since taught up in Washington on a year's sabbatical. I think he'd like to get to back to California right now. But he's continued primarily specializing in agricultural workers' problems in the Midwest.

Fry: My goodness, Jerry Brown could have used him when he first came into office, with all of his farmworker trouble.

Dutton: During that stage, Ed was trying to make sure he had Kansas tenure. He had no real economic support. His wife worked, she had graduated from Berkeley. It was a time in which they felt that getting economic security and getting established at Lawrence, Kansas were important. Now he's got a couple of experiments going on in California again. He's overseeing a project. I think they've chosen sixty Chicano families, and they're trying to prove or see what are the problems of Chicano families making the jump that, let's say, Okie-Arkies did in the late thirties and forties after they had been migratory workers. They're running the farms, and their own organization is hiring other people. Again, can they make an economically viable, profitable enterprise out of farming? So he's still very active.

Fry: Is that project in California?

Dutton: Yes. I'm not sure if it's a Berkeley project or not. It's a Ford Foundation grant of some kind. So, you can see that my brother tended to be a social activist in the beginning of the 1950s; whereas I went into politics. He always said that I went the square route, and he went the more legitimate route.

The Limits of Politics and Government

Fry: You both seem to have the spirit of reform.

Dutton: Yes, very much so. Why that is, I'm not sure. Again, I think it's partly our parents, the thirties, Democratic politics, the boys school we went to, a highly idealistic type, almost too purist in many ways. We were inculcated there.

I, intellectually, now have considerable critique of the utopian or idealistic approach. That helps to shake up society and bring about some changes, but what I can't decide in my own mind, in a serious way, is at what cost? This doesn't make me a conservative or a traditionalist. I'm looking for a third route or a merger or a fresh insight--even just a glimmer of a new human and social approach. I find the cost of idealism high in terms of the wars of the centuries, and in terms of thwarted, humanly and socially uprooted reform. Has the reform expression in American history in the last hundred years really resulted in the bureaucratic state that probably now is as oppressive a danger for an affluent, educated time as my generation thought economic, capitalist, malefactors of wealth--and those various expressions--were?

Fry: It sounds like you have come around to questioning the questions.

Dutton: Yes. To jump much later, when I was assistant to the president in Washington, D.C. in the early sixties--I'm very critical of the Kennedy-Johnson period now. On one hand, I think we all have to function and live within our society and times and be viable. At the same time, one has to keep some perspective. I think we've made improvements in this country in the last thirty or forty years, but I think they're improvements that probably have come more out of what the economy has generated, most easily indicated by beginning to raise up a black middle class. I think there had to be some thresholds crossed and bottlenecks broken. Let's say politics can act out things symbolically, can trigger things briefly, can point directions. But then if politics, through a lot of legislation and regulations, continue to try to control the context, I think it suffocates and bureaucratizes and dehumanizes in an underlying sense far more than it helps.

I think that there is a profound vigor in our society, and in much of human society, especially in the West. I think there is an economic vigor in the American economy and others, whether socialist, capitalist, or whatever it is, that probably does more to solve problems. I guess what I'm suggesting is, what are the limits of politics? What are the limits of legislation, of law, of social action, of conscious activism? I would say, too, at another level, what are the limits of education? I've come to believe that the

Dutton: human spirit's subjectivism needs to be encouraged as much as rationality. One can be too analytical in one's life or in solutions to problems. The University of California, I think, needs to be held in tension with other aspects of the society and state. I think that's what Mario Savio was saying, and I think that's what Ronald Reagan and Jerry Brown have implicitly been saying. I came in, for example, as a regent and totally identified with the institution. I defended the university and the administration against Reagan on a broad student, faculty, and financial series of issues. I thought that was a necessary holding action.

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Dutton: To get the university all the money it can and to defend the administration against outside intrusion--those are legitimate functions. But what you then end up with is that the faculty wants to continue about its own introspective, institutional priorities and relationships, maybe not putting as much attention (to take an easy criticism) on undergraduate education as it should. The administration, the statewide officials, want to organize, that is bureaucratize, and lay on more layers of standardization and this and that. A number of groups just want to pour concrete and build buildings.

There has to be a broader and more critical input into the university. It isn't going to come from the administration. It isn't even going to come from the faculty. The faculty is admirable, a tremendous benefit. But there is the need to keep pumping in outside influences, a mix of outside society. I don't say the 'real' world, but the various components of our culture and society.

Another level of what I'm saying is that institutionalism, whether educational, political, or otherwise, I find increasingly suspect, even though also unavoidable. It needs to be kept under scrutiny far more than it is. I have no doubt that it, and 'continuity,' will prevail in any skirmish with disorder short of economic collapse or war. The difficult balance between individualism and institutionalism needs more help for the free human spirit.

Fry: When you talk about politics, you're referring to the structured politics, political organizations, right?

Dutton: Yes and no. I have seen politics as always a fluidity of people, ideas, symbols, events, with the organizational overlay fairly superficial, even though useful or necessary. In California, as you know, we have less structured political organization than any place in the United States. I refer to that, for example, in my

Dutton: book Changing Sources of Power.^{*} I'm essentially saying that the parties as historically constituted are not essential. I have had arguments here in Washington with David Broder of the [Washington] Post and others who say that we can't keep coherence and order in our lawmaking, in our policy digesting and political processes, if we don't have the parties. I don't agree with that. I think California is a good example of how weak the parties can be, and yet how good at least compared to other states and countries, 'government,' society and life can be. So many factors besides political parties 'organize' us.

But more than just political parties, what are the limits of government? How much should Sacramento do? How much should liberals turn to government to try to help farmworkers or people on welfare, the poor, the discriminated against, rather than, oh, direct action? Direct action can be of a radical nature, which I think is counter-productive in the American psyche to a great extent. How much does it have to be done through economic and cultural and other means?

To go back to the thirties and my early conditioning, I still tend to believe a great deal in economic determinism. I don't believe in it exclusively, and I think it can be overstated. What I call cultural politics, or just culture, is another key incubus of society and life. Another area of leverage on life and the world is self help. That's a terribly reactionary premise to come back to, yet I'm not sure there's really a solution to poverty and black problems until there's considerable self help. You've got to get rid of the oppression that's on top of it through politics, culture, economics, etc.

But if, for example, you replace the economic, capitalistic repression with bureaucratic governmental repression, I don't think that's headway particularly. I used to think it was. Now I question it. Or, why spend one's life working on these things and lessen the corporate economic repression with a less severe, but perhaps more suffocating bureaucratic repression. What are we really doing to or with our overall society? The university is somewhat of a microcosm of all this. Anyway, that's where I am now.

^{*}Frederick G. Dutton, Changing Sources of Power, American Politics in the 1970s (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971).

College and World War II Experiences

Fry: We've got a picture here of your political evolution, but I'm still not sure how your career as a student at the University of California fed into all of this.

Dutton: Not too much. I don't think that the university undergraduate life made a great imprint on me. I think that it has a very indelible impact on a lot of people. I don't think it did on me for various reasons. I could be wrong.

As I've indicated before, I was a good student, a reader, an activist in high school. I was fairly purposeful at that stage. I think that that sort of achievement and unconscious parent and school (and self) pressure to do well were excessive, as I look back at it now. Without having my kids be slovenly--I want them to have good grades and be able to take good care of themselves in the world--but I want them to be a little bit more in touch with themselves and less overt rationality and book learning.

Fry: The inner world as well as the outer.

Dutton: Exactly. I was much more other-directed.

Fry: Yes, I guess we all were.

Dutton: Anyway, I was fairly well-defined when I came to the university. Then during my first semester there, World War II comes along. It was a whole unravelling situation after that.

Fry: It sounded like you had a lot of experiences in World War II that were so opposite to anything you'd had before.

Dutton: Yes, let's say this is the major rupture of my generation. One of the really impressionable books on me in the late thirties was A.A. Milne's (the author of Winnie the Pooh) Peace Without Honor, which was a pacifist book. My father had enjoyably been in the medical corps in World War I as a young man, stationed at Battle Creek, Michigan--not overseas. We used to have fairly intense arguments, but nobody really ever lost his temper or got ridiculous. One of the few times I can remember that I think I got rather extreme was arguing that I would not get involved in war, and Hitler was terribly wrong but nothing was going to be solved by war. How wrong that was, despite the cost in human lives. Journey's End,*

*Written by R.C. Sherriff, 1928.

Dutton: a play of that period, was also terribly impressionable. Milne's piece about honor was terribly vivid. That was when I was a junior or senior in high school.

Within a little over a year, there was World War II. I was soon then working in a war emergency shipyard as a sheet-metal carrier. Another year after that I was in the army in infantry basic training. In another year I was in combat. So there was a real flip-over.

Berkeley was strictly a period to rush through. I went through Berkeley actually in school time, in about three or three and a half years. I always thought, "Geez, I'm going to get drafted. I better get as much done as I can." Whereas the kids in the sixties thought they should drop out, the kids of my period, with me as an example, thought that if we didn't cram in as many courses as we could--let's say education was like oxygen. You had to soak it up and you couldn't take time out. The army was going to give us our time out, and some of us didn't want it. So, in any event, I went through college in too-crammed a way.

Fry: You didn't go into student politics at Berkeley?

Dutton: Zero. The reason was, as I say, the first semester you go, you're sort of settling down. I went to the Daily Californian, thinking I wanted to get on that. I was active in the fraternity house, with lots of resistances. Three months after school starts, there's Pearl Harbor. From then on it was a much different context.

Fry: How did you feel when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor?

Dutton: I'd been out at a party late the night before and woke up on a sleeping porch about 10:30 a.m. Somebody came in yelling, "The Japs have bombed Pearl Harbor," which had been on the radio. We all listened. I either don't recall my reaction or I was fairly detached. But there was no great emotional outpouring, and I didn't want to rush off to join the army. I didn't hate the 'Japs.' One of my two best friends in high school had been a Japanese boy by the name of Ernie Makino, the son of the cook at Montezuma. He's now a veterinarian; he went to Davis. One just sort of got carried along on a rapidly-moving glacier, which was the war.

I had taken ROTC at Berkeley. I disliked it. [laughter] I had never had anything to do with guns and didn't like them. Then, one of the small ironies in my life--it's neither here nor there, but it's how what one does as an undergraduate can affect you. In order to stay in school one more semester, I joined upper-division ROTC. I would never otherwise have done it in a hundred years, but I did. Then I thought no more about it. Later I was drafted, which

Dutton: was standard procedure during that period. After basic training I went through OCS; I was sent abroad, became a POW and all that. I came back, was discharged. I finished Berkeley and got married. I went to law school. The Korean War came along within a year after I got out of Stanford Law School. I was called up for the Korean War. I'd never been active in the reserve. I didn't know I was in the reserve. But because I had joined one semester of upper-division ROTC at Berkeley, they said when I got my second-lieutenant's commission in World War II that they had put me in the reserve. I protested, but to no avail.

Fry: There were so many boys called up.

Dutton: There were a lot of people like that. That's why I never looked too kindly on ROTC. I think it's necessary and a legitimate function, but I find that they take advantage of impressionable young men, and I was one of them. For many years I was rather rankled about that.

Fry: So you did have to go to Korea.

Dutton: What happened was the frequent stupidity of the military. I was recalled and sent to the Sixth Army headquarters in San Francisco as a legal officer. I tried my best to get out of it. I was not successful.

At that stage in the Korean War, the South Koreans were losing badly, Americans were under terrible pressure. They decided that since I had been to law school in the meantime, lawyers were more needed in the military than a first lieutenant in the infantry, which is a very stupid priority, even though it may have saved my life. In any event, I spent a little bit of time in the Pentagon and some more in San Francisco, which was a good assignment, and then got shipped off to Korea.

We got as far as Japan, and they decided that if there was anything they needed in Japan, it was American lawyers. So I finally ended spending almost a year in Japan doing legal work for the army, navy, and air force. I worked in a heavy procurement agency dealing with the Japanese economy. It was a good experience. I liked Japan.

Like World War II, having survived and not gotten killed, I find it a very exciting experience. It's nice when you live through it and you're a survivor. I've never believed in veterans' organizations or been active. I try to keep my perspective on it. For years I did not even look at that whole experience. I had a son who started Berkeley in the late sixties. He was strongly anti-war. He obstructed the Golden Gate Bridge with some others, and I went and joined them as a regent, one rainy morning. I believed in it, and they were being non-violent and so forth. The incident got in the press, for good or bad.

Dutton: While I think there certainly has to be a national military, I still find that the critique or the objections by a lot of the young people today are a good thing. It's a healthy thing. It's good for them and good for the overall society, constructive in the Vietnam context and useful in terms of the re-thinking of the value input that you put into the overall society.

Fry: You were in law school as we were approaching the Korean War.

Dutton: I finished in late 1948, then the bar exam, and starting in a law firm. After I got out of the army in World War II, I took a philosophy course through the extension program to get back into study habits, found it too much of a breeze, got an easy A, and enrolled at Berkeley in early 1946. I lived in I-House [International House]. I was able in five months to finish my year that I still had remaining. I took a lot of courses. I switched my major to something called American Civilization, which was a potpourri of things in which I could get out in a hurry.

Fry: That was supposed to be a fairly heavy course.

Dutton: It was a fairly heavy course, but I found that with it the various things I had taken before going into the military allowed me to graduate in a hurry. It was a little bit of 'get your diploma and get out.' Since I'd been in the army I felt that I was getting older. Actually I was only a year behind. I should have been in the class of '45, and I was in the class of '46.

Fry: As we sit here talking now in 1977, those chronological age levels don't mean a thing. [laughter]

Dutton: But they were very important in that culture group.

Fry: Exactly. You had to measure your progress.

Dutton: I got married that summer, several weeks after graduation. I applied to law school at Boalt Hall (Berkeley), Stanford, and Harvard, and got accepted at all three. But I found a place to live at Stanford before I could in Berkeley, and I didn't know what I'd do if I had gone east, so I went to Stanford Law School. That was the practical, unintellectual basis on which I chose my law school.

Fry: There was a housing shortage.

Dutton: Oh, it was terrible. All kinds of young married people were living with their parents or in one or two rooms and such as that. I got a little tiny place high in the hills in back of Palo Alto for practically nothing. I had placed a want ad and written a bunch of

Dutton: letters, and the publisher of the Palo Alto paper, whom I didn't know, heard about it. He had a little farm, so we went up there. Later we lived in two plywood rooms on the back of a garage--terrible and lovely.

I went to Stanford straight through the summers, and I got out in January 1949. We had GI bill money, and my wife worked on a local newspaper. I started practicing with a law firm in San Mateo. We had our first child. Then along comes the Korean War, and that's when I got called in again. When I got back from the Korean thing I got a good legal job in Los Angeles. Psychologically I was again wanting to make up for 'lost' time--lost in a conventional, not experiential sense. But I had been getting more 'experience' than anyone needed in a compressed time. I went down to Los Angeles and started practicing law really for the first time intensively. I found it somewhat of a bore, which I often have. I make my living practicing law, but I never encourage people to go into it. I find the social process of making law, or affecting law, so much more enjoyable and exciting than court work of minutely interpreting the law, of working within the pigeonholes that congress and governors and presidents and state legislatures are carpentering.

Fry: Why did you choose law school?

Dutton: Good question. I've often wondered that myself. [laughter] I guess if I had my life to do over again, I would try to be a journalist, although I'm not a good writer. My explanation is this. I came from a father who was a doctor, so I was going to stay in the professions, or I was going to get more education like my brother later did. I was going to take graduate work. I was in an educational milieu to a great extent. I was unconsciously probably status-oriented and wanting 'respectability' and 'standing.' Also, I felt somewhat cheated in the educational process by World War II, sort of missing the undergraduate learning experience, so I was going to go get some more education. If you're sort of a practical, purposeful person, the law is a good graduate field to go into. If I had been deeper into my undergraduate work, let's say in economics or X, Y, or Z, I might have pursued that. But I wasn't. I had raced through the courses.

Fry: It sounds like you didn't really have a burning ambition to be the world's hottest criminal lawyer or even a great labor lawyer.

Dutton: Never.

Fry: Nothing specific?

Dutton: I started law school, I think, on the basis that it was a good analytical process, it would immerse one fairly intensively in various specific fields, and it was useful later on. But no, I had

Dutton: no great burning ambition as to the law. I'm still quite cavalier about it, which I think is relevant later on in going into political activity. In law school I was a pretty good student. I wasn't the greatest. I wasn't Order of the Coif, but I was on the law review. In fact, I was in the class group that started the Stanford Law Review.

Fry: Did you help start it?

Dutton: Yes. I was on the original board of editors for the law review. That's a good example of my idiosyncracies. I was chosen for it, and then I tried to talk the dean out of it. I said that there are more law reviews in America than we begin to need. This is just another thing for people to subscribe to and have to read. Why can't we get good legal writing, and all the educational benefits of the law review without throwing another law review in the law libraries in the country. But Stanford had a new dean then, Carl Spaeth, a fine man, and he thought Stanford would not be a prestige law school unless it had a law review like everybody else. So we started a law review. [laughter] Among the group were Shirley Hufstедler, the first U.S. Secretary of Education and Warren Christopher, Deputy U.S. Secretary of State since 1977.

Fry: Before we go on, I have one more question. How long was your POW experience, and what did it mean to you?

Dutton: It was not very long. It was from about January 4, 1945 until late April of that year. The sequence was this. We'd been shipped over in a hurry and thrown into battle. We were fairly inexperienced. We did some cursory fighting and getting shot at and all that kind of stuff--highly unpleasant. I had a heavy machine-gun platoon that was supporting a rifle company. We landed in southern France, and went up the Rhone Valley. We went through the Vorges Mountains and Alsace-Lorraine, and then slightly north of Strasborg.

Fry: This was Patton?

Dutton: No, this was the Seventh Army. This was Patch's. Then there was the Battle of the Bulge, which occurred way to our left flank about two hundred miles. The Seventh Army that we were in was ordered to counterattack to put pressure on the Germans on their flank. We attacked, and the Germans, as you almost always do, counterattacked.

One morning about January 4, snow on the ground, sleeping in the snow in sleeping bags in ground dugouts, when we woke up at dawn, the Germans during the night had overrun the whole area with tanks and infantry. The infantry company I was attached to had mainly either been shot or surrendered and taken. I and about seventeen to twenty others decided to fight house to house, not out of heroism but because we couldn't imagine that the Americans wouldn't come back and rescue us. It was inconceivable that wouldn't happen.

Dutton: Well, they didn't. We fought all day, moving house to house to retreat under heavy German pressure. We finally found ourselves in a farmhouse on the edge of the town and had no place else to retreat to. Late that afternoon a German mortar shell came through the roof and exploded in the room I was in. I got some mortar fragments in my chest and in my foot--nothing serious. Then I lost lots of blood and passed out.

The people I was with had held out over night. A couple of others had been hit too. We decided to surrender about dawn. A German '88' team with a major artillery piece prepared to blow down the farmhouse at point-blank range. I was carried across the Rhine River, put in the middle of a haystack for a while. Finally I was interrogated and transported in a wagon to a base camp, then shipped to Baden-Baden.

I was put in the hospital there with Germans mostly. There were a couple of Americans. I was finally put on a German hospital troop train that went through the Black Forest. We went down to Bavaria.

I was originally, for about a month and a half, in a POW hospital in a town about thirty or forty kilometers north of Munich, Freising, in a converted monastery on a hill around the center of town. It had an old Polish POW doctor who could never see what he was doing. There were French, British, Russian, and Eastern Europeans. It was a motley group of wounded. Some had been there since 1939 or 1940. There were some severely wounded who couldn't be moved but still had survived.

Finally, in early March, before Roosevelt died, I was moved to a POW camp at Moosberg, Germany. It was not too far away. The Germans separated officers and enlisted people. I was put in with a bunch of U.S. Air Force officers. We used to stand in the prison exercise compound and watch the two or three thousand-plane raids by the Americans over Munich in the last weeks of the war, cheering the airplane dog fights, praying for the crippled American planes falling back out of formation and vulnerable to then being picked off, and agonizing over the American planes crashing down.

In the prison camp there was not much food. We used to get a lot of kohlrabi soup. The treatment was not good; it was not bad. Worst, it was cold, crowded, a little smelly, churlish and depressing. The Germans didn't have food for themselves, so they certainly didn't have it for prisoners of war. The last two or three weeks, their transportation system was completely bombed out. They had had a cheese factory in the little German town that was close to the prison camp, and they couldn't get rid of this produce to Munich, so we started getting cheese. On one hand, it was binding. On the other hand, it was very nutritious.

Fry: At least you got some protein.

Dutton: Yes. Life in the prison camp was interesting in that one had nothing to do all day long. There was a lot of talk. Here's a group of four or five or six thousand men, and the first thing missed and discussed is food, not sex at all. When the human spirit gets deflated, there's not enough energy or exercise to matter. The first thing, which is normally terrible, is endless food conversation. You talk about food all day.

There had been a ragtag Red Cross library put in because this prison camp had British people who'd been captured in North Africa in 1939, 1940, and 1941. I think I read the biography of Jefferson by Claude Bower first, then a number of other books. You could read about a book every two days because that's all you had to do. We read whatever was available. It's an example of books really being a godsend far more, in a situation like that, than you'd realize. I would guess that in a less mobile, less sophisticated culture of the past, books were more precious than they are in our present culture.

Anyway, by late April the Soviets and Americans had the Germans on the run, and we got liberated. Most everybody was flown out. I heard that my division, the Forty-Second, was in Munich. So I hitchhiked down to Munich to try to find it, spent a few days there, and finally got taken out to the French coast, I was flown there, then a troopship to New York and a train across the U.S. I spent some time in Santa Barbara in unnecessary military rehabilitation. All the POWs had about six weeks of medical and psychological scrutiny to see if there was anything really wrong that had not been detected by the first examinations.

Typical of the period. I thought that was the end of my war activities. But I was soon ordered to Fort Ord at Monterey, California. They immediately put me into training for what was assumed to be the coming invasion of Japan. It was the first time in my life I didn't at all like the world. I thought I'd have to go back into combat. But they finally sort of make you submit. A bunch of us were training with submachine guns for God knows what. When the Japanese surrendered, that was a much more important date for me than my combat or POW experience in World War II.

Fry: You were ready for it to be over.

Dutton: Yes. Once you've been in, you're both a more sophisticated fighter and more of a coward as well, or when the Korean War came along a few years later--even more so. The best fighters are very young men who have no sophistication about what it really is all about. You take orders and you're gone when you go in.

Dutton: I would have to say in summary, that the military experience of World War II is more vivid to me than my undergraduate education at Berkeley. Not good or bad, while also a little bit of a walking nightmare. Like an awful lot of people, I didn't like military service. I didn't rebel; I submitted. I remember, for example, I was going through basic training at Camp Roberts in the summer of '43. It gets to be 100° in the shade down there, miserable. We were wearing OD's [olive drabs], and they had us at times march twenty miles beginning at five in the morning, carrying parts of machine guns. They were trying to wear you down, break you into discipline, so you would learn to conform and maybe also hunker down to protect yourself in combat.

There was another guy who'd gone to Berkeley with me. Much later he was deputy director of the U.S. Budget Bureau in Washington in the sixties, Ken Hansen. He and I used to escape to a shade tree during the ten-minute breaks every hour, and we took along a little pocket book of verse. It was a rather conventional bunch of verse, the tried and true stuff of the centuries. But we'd sneak off in the shade and read it for each ten-minute break. It was the only way to survive and to go from the softness of middle-class rearing, the softness of undergraduate life at Berkeley, to infantry training in the middle of World War II. That was a shock!

Again, to respond to your question, those I think were more indelible than classes and orthodox education. I will say that while I was very supportive of the anti-Vietnam and most of the student rebellion of the sixties, I'm afraid human beings--and this tells something about the madness or the animal in us--seem to need intense occasional existential experiences. We're in a period of routine right now--regrouping and rest. That is necessary. But I'm afraid, especially for some young people, that intense commitment, things that war provides or radicalism, or passionate love, are needed by at least a certain portion of the population. To be constructive, an educational institution like the university, or society and national leadership, must find ways of giving vent to the idealism, and give vent to this existential intensity that's needed by many human beings. I think World War II did that, and the Depression did that. I think the primitiveness of life, the difficulty of life over past centuries and millenia did that. I think the radicalism of the sixties somewhat, perhaps, abortively did that for a certain period. But as we look ahead, as society gets more affluent, more comfortable, we are going to have to find means of coping with this other timeless, ten-million-year-old aspect of the human being in a considerable number of individuals, or I think it will cause all kinds of problems--from neuroses to terrorism--that are terribly undesirable.

Fry: That's why I was wondering about your POW experience. Some psychologist who was in a prisoner camp, wrote once that he had realized for the first time that there is--and maybe this is what you mean by

Fry: existentialism--something inside you that remains free even though you are in a totally unfree situation, and that, if you survive prison camps, you manage to find that. Does this strike any bell with your experience?

Dutton: Yes, but it's rather more intellectual than a "lived-in" perception. So many of our great tracts on freedom really have been written by people long in prison.

Meeting Pat Brown and Adlai Stevenson##

Dutton: Why don't we go back to 1950 after I got back from the Korean War. I was practicing law in Los Angeles. I was more settled in a family way. We had one child and then had a second. Life was very good. But occupationally I was still trying to develop as a lawyer. I was also still not entirely satisfied with it. To keep this interview in personal perspective, it should be remembered that as intensive as politics and government became for me, it and being a lawyer and my bits of writing are still only twenty percent at most, of a life. Marriage, children, the human condition are the main eighty percent, despite outward, socializing appearances.

I'd done some research while I was at Stanford Law School that I hadn't completely used in a law review Note on the deficiencies of the state constitution. I wrote a fairly pop article from it for the Op-ed section Sunday editorial section of the L.A. Times. I sent it in cold. I didn't know anybody. They accepted it and printed it as a full page piece.

That sort of hooked me on the idea that I wanted to write about state issues for the L.A. Times. First I sent in an occasional contribution to the L.A. Times, and finally they started using a couple of articles a month. I was still practicing law, but they were letting me be sort of a house Democrat in their editorial section. They were even more Republicans than they are now. I used to write about state tax issues and things in the state legislature and an occasional legal piece. But they were usually political, analytical articles.

My political tendencies were also very obvious in another way. I came back from the Korean War, and the 1952 Stevenson presidential campaign was on. I went down to do a little bit of work in the campaign and decided I wanted to do more, so I put together a pamphlet.

Fry: Was this 1952?

Dutton: Yes. The pamphlet was about Stevenson issues as they related particularly to California. I couldn't interest the local Democrats in it because they didn't know me, just somebody coming in off the street. So I finally paid about \$600 to get it printed myself. I was so green that I forgot to have a union printing bug on it, a political essential, as I realized later. [laughter]

Fry: You were really going to get in there.

Dutton: A little presumptuous maybe. [laughter]

Fry: Yes, but after you spend all that time writing it, you don't want it to just lie in the attic.

Dutton: Nothing more came of it. It sank without a trace.

Fry: I hope there's one left that our office can have.

Dutton: That was, I think, my first political commitment. Carl McGowan, who was Stevenson's chief speechwriter, is now a federal appellate judge here in Washington. He'd been on the Illinois state court when Stevenson was governor. He saw the pamphlet, and he and I had some brief conversations.

I dabbled a little bit and researched more, but nothing of any great moment. That was the end of it. But to me it is an early sign that I was politically committed.

Fry: You were a political animal.

Dutton: Yes.

Fry: But you didn't really work within the partisan structure.

Dutton: No, I didn't. I was just getting started in law practice. Everybody in the office was terribly conservative. I had written this long piece for the L.A. Times, and you like to see what you write in print. So I was more involved in that bag than any other one.

Then, going into 1953, Pat Brown saw one or two of my pieces and liked them. He was always on the look-out for fresh, younger resource talent--that is a frequent trait of successful politicians. He invited me over to the state building in L.A. I went to lunch with him once or twice. Nothing more came of it for a year. My emphasis was on practicing law. But that was the first time I got to know Pat at all. When he ran for re-election as attorney general in 1954, as a Democrat running away from the Democratic ticket and party, he invited me to a couple of campaign-strategy meetings to sit in with his inner group of four or five people. It was very heady because I had no experience; I was green. He liked my ideas. So I

Dutton: got that experience or exposure. Then, a guy by the name of Richard Graves, Dick Graves, who was the head of the League of California Cities--

Fry: A good Republican.

Dutton: He turned Democrat though, and ran against incumbent Goodie Knight for governor in 1954. He heard about me from Pat, and he invited me to help in his campaign. I did some research. Jimmy Roosevelt, of all people, was in charge of research for the Dick Graves campaign. It was hard to believe.

Fry: I didn't know that.

Dutton: Yes. It's hard to believe now, but he was at the time.

Since I was doing some work on public utilities, I did a long critique of the state Public Utilities Commission, where it was vulnerable to attack, where it had been wrong in its decisions. That's mimeographed someplace. Graves used it and so forth. It obviously got few or no votes. He was disastrously beaten. A fine man--'governmental'--but little political intuitiveness.

Here again, I was in effect getting a little bit deeper into politics all the time. But it was strictly at the level of research, writing memos, speech drafts--no organizational stuff, no real in-headquarters things. It was also heady in that, as I say, I got to know Pat Brown first. Then I got to know Dick Graves. So I didn't bubble up through club movements or local sources.

Pat was re-elected as attorney general in 1954. Graves was wiped out. I then was back in law practice. Stevenson was cranking up to run for president again. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. had heard about me, I think from Pat or someone. Schlesinger called, then wrote me in the late fall of 1955 asking if I would put together the basic research material for Stevenson in California--what its politics then were, what the demographic problems were, who were the key people, what issues might be most appealing to California, etc. I wrote a long critique. No experience. Regular politicians are shocked by radical entry like this, somebody new coming in from the outside, somewhat more detached in their perspective, willingness to criticize the existing arrangement. In any event, I did that.

On the basis of that I was invited through Pat to take working charge of the Stevenson campaign in Southern California. They had an umbrella of four key leaders. Bill Rosenthal, I think his name was, was state chairman of the Democratic party. John Anson Ford, who was on the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, was co-chairman. Glenn Anderson, now a long-time congressman, then a liberal club movement leader, was another co-chairman. There was one other

Dutton: person. I don't recall who that was. There were four co-chairmen of the campaign, a typical political compromise arrangement. I, as a young man with no ties to anybody, was put in charge as executive director to run the headquarters and the office and the operation because the four key figures were all feuding or were preoccupied with other activities. Very classic, I realize now. Very typical political arrangement, which the political scientists rarely realize.

Fry: They have to bring in more neutral--

Dutton: Well, more neutral, somebody younger, who will really do the work and give a full commitment. Then I was with the Stevenson campaign on a volunteer basis (supposedly practicing law), traveled occasionally with Stevenson in California, worked all through the campaign. I still was having to practice law, being unpaid in the campaign, and working primarily in legal matters for a very conservative utility company in Southern California. It objected to my politics. The president of the company once took me to lunch, discussed a great future for me without politics. But I shrugged that off. Years later, when I was in the governor's office and then the White House, he called on me "as a conservative who maybe was mistaken."

In effect--this is not overstating--I think I quickly became the key person in the 1956 Stevenson presidential campaign in Southern California. I hired two other key people. One of them was Dick Tuck, who later became famous with his so-called dirty tricks. Another one, Meredith Burch, was a young woman from the University of Oregon, who came down to L.A. from San Francisco. She subsequently moved into the attorney general's office, then the White House, then the State Department with me, now she's a TV producer of political films here in Washington. But we opened the headquarters and ran the operation. A high point was when I went with Stevenson to the state club movement convention in Fresno. Our campaign defeated Kefauver in the 1956 presidential primary. We went to the national Democratic convention in Chicago. I was elected the delegation secretary. Pat Brown was its chairman.

I saw a lot of Pat Brown in that period. I got a sophisticated, intense education on the political structure and system and personalities in California and then, to a lesser extent, nationally in the fifties. It couldn't have been better. In the November election, Stevenson got wiped out everywhere. Southern California I think was the only major area of the top ten in the country that did better for Stevenson in 1956 than in 1952. Everything is relative.

In any event, I seemingly had done well. People were apparently impressed with the show I ran. At the end of it, Stevenson invited me to Chicago, and even to join his law practice, and Pat invited me to become chief assistant attorney general of California, based in San Francisco. [laughter]

Fry: What a choice!

Dutton: I finally went with Pat.

Fry: Why?

Dutton: I never had any desire to live in Chicago, and was not a member of the Illinois bar. I admired Stevenson and got to be close to him in Washington in the early 1960s, when he was U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. But I'm now fairly critical of him as impractical, aloof, somewhat naive, lovely with ideas but not committed enough to implement them beyond the stage of articulation. Politics should be an arena of ideas plus action. He was also far more conservative privately than his campaign and public statements had shown, and his campaigns had not been radical ones. Also, I was from San Francisco. I like California. At the time we had two young children, and it just made sense to stay in California instead of going to Chicago.

Fry: I have a whole page of questions that I want to ask you on the 1954 campaign, and it is now 11:00 o'clock.

Dutton: I'd better quit for today.

Fry: This makes a neat stopping point. Whenever we can meet again we'll pick up right here.

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II ADLAI STEVENSON'S BID FOR THE PRESIDENCY, 1956

[Date of Interview: April 15, 1978]##

Dutton is Campaign Coordinator for Southern California

Fry: I'd like to start with how you managed to get from writing articles in Op ed in the L.A. Times to being directly involved in California Democratic politics.

Dutton: It is illustrative of Pat, and California political processes more broadly. I mentioned that after I started to write occasional articles for the Times, Pat Brown called and asked me to lunch. Pat was always reaching out for what he called "new blood," new ideas, new people.

He was a man who was always seeking to grow. He had come out of San Francisco Irish politics to a considerable extent. In the 1950s he had an assistant, an able guy who was chief deputy attorney general of California, Bill [William V.] O'Connor, a handsome, charming man who knew Hollywood. But Pat was still looking for individuals like myself who were a little bit more bookish and perhaps more ideological. By that I mean more liberal than Pat and O'Connor and Frank Mackin who later became a judge. Mackin is one of Pat's long-time personal and political friends from Los Angeles.

Fry: More liberal than--

Dutton: Than California's Irish-Catholic politics, which were a key early base for Pat. Pat was also looking for individuals a little bit more idea oriented. Pat got that impression of me from the articles I wrote for the Times.

In any event, we had met and talked. After our first meeting, he would occasionally call me up when he came to Los Angeles. (His main office as attorney general, and his home, were in San Francisco. Pat, like Earl Warren, very early in his career recognized that a politically ambitious northern Californian must spend half of each

Dutton: week and most of his vacations in L.A.) I was just one of probably a number of similar people that he was trying to bring into his "inner group," as he would laughingly say. He thought he would get ideas and insights from his "new blood," and he thought he would be able to build a network of people that he could draw on and make use of in his own political activities and aspirations.

I want to go back to late '55 now, the threshold to the presidential campaign in '56. Pat, as you remember, had long both been involved in statewide Democratic politics and tried to stay separate from partisanship, as was a style in California politics. Goodie Knight, Warren, and most successful California politicians did that, unlike the many Democratic losers over the years, with Culbert Olson the main exception and he was only a one-term winner--and in the '30s. As the '56 campaign approached, Pat was getting involved in presidential politics as he had in 1952. Presidential politics are what might be called prestige politics for someone then at his level. The '56 campaign pulled him into party politics more than did his activities with relation to the office of attorney general and his other efforts.

In a political sense, it probably could be said he was moving along two tracks at once: trying to make contact with regular Democrats or the Democratic base in California and still keeping his independence of maneuver. He became more party oriented in presidential election years ('52, for example, when he headed the state Democratic delegation after Truman pulled out of the race; '56 is another example; and we see it again later in 1960). But in the off-year elections as 1950, and '54, which were the state elections in California, he pulled back substantially to a primarily separate or negligibly partisan stance.

Fry: The bipartisan, cross-filing--?

Dutton: Exactly. Pat was more of a Democrat in the presidential year, and more of an Earl Warren bipartisan in off-year elections.

Fry: Just as Earl Warren had been.

Dutton: Exactly the same pattern. In 1955-56, Pat was getting more involved as at least a tepid partisan. He had been much impressed with Stevenson in '52. He thought Stevenson was not politic enough, but he admired him and that was genuine. Pat decided, with Congressman Clair Engle and others, that they would head up a delegation in California for Stevenson if Stevenson ran, as he was making clear he was going to do. Pat and others--Roger Kent who at the time I think was statewide chairman, Libby Smith [Gatov] who later was national committeewoman, Don Bradley who was a political pro in San Francisco and Engle--they decided to form a Stevenson delegation. I had gotten to know all of those people casually,

Dutton: Bradley a little better than the others at that point. The logical people to head up the Democratic presidential campaign in Southern California, or to be the nucleus for it, were individuals like Bill Rosenthal, who was Southern California or state Democratic chairman at the time--he later became a local judge in Los Angeles--John Anson Ford, who was chairman of the board of supervisors of Los Angeles County, Elizabeth Snyder who had been Democratic national committeewoman and state chairman; Glenn Anderson, an assemblyman who was active in the leadership of the Democratic club movement and later congressman; Paul Ziffren, the activist Democratic National Committeeman from Southern California; an activist woman from Ventura whose man I do not recall--Goldie something; and others like Dick Richards, a state senator, later unsuccessful U.S. Senate candidate and representative of the liberal Democratic constituency in Southern California.

My point of all this is that four key senior people finally were picked as co-chairmen. But obviously, you can't have a campaign run by co-chairmen with very active egos. So I was brought in as a young lawyer at a lower level to run things. I was an attorney for the Southern Counties Gas Company, which was a thoroughly Republican organization. I had no political experience, but Pat pulled me in, and I moved in with the consent of the others, being safely unknown, to be sort of coordinator of the four chairmen and detail man. Well, as things happen in politics like that, the one person, even though he is at a second level, actually has a lot more ability to run with the ball than the four co-chairmen, each of whom was usually jockeying and at a standoff with each other and too interested in ego trips for publicity, contacts, speaking engagements, etc.

I raise the point only in that it illustrates how Pat was always trying to pull diverse people and groups together, and at the same time was considerably more sophisticated and conscious of administrative problems than I think he is given credit for. He wanted to make sure that somebody would actually get a series of local campaign headquarters open, get campaign material distributed, do scheduling for himself and Stevenson, get a speakers bureau going, and things like that. No big deal, but he was conscious of the functional mechanics that have to be taken care of. So, in any event, I was brought in for that. Pat had made himself, with everybody's consensus, statewide chairman, he being the only statewide Democratic office-holder at the time.

Here's another interesting point about Pat's political approach. He helped get the Stevenson operation off the ground, with others, and became statewide chairman. But then he very quickly bubbled up above all the petty feuding and problems that go on in California Democratic politics or in any politics really, and above the nitty-gritty of a campaign, leaving that to "the others." Pat on the one

Dutton: hand is a politician, but like a great many prominent politicians, he was not all that conversant with really running campaigns and did not want to get bogged down in that. He could run himself well--this was true of Earl Warren, Knight and others, too--but as soon as Pat had a campaign network put together, he wanted to stay everybody's friend, and be able to reach out to all the various factions while staying out of the personal and factional elbowing and upstaging which constantly goes on. So he very quickly bubbled upward, above the nonsense. At times it was almost as though he then disappeared. Having moved deep into the party, he moved back to his aloof, state-wide stance again.

The End of Print Politics

Fry: Pat mentioned that in 1958 that you actually ran the whole gubernatorial campaign.

Dutton: Yes. We had about as highly centralized a campaign as you could have, which I strongly believe in. You almost need a good dictator in a major political campaign [laughs], somebody who is willing to take the heat, to make quick decisions and relate all the different elements. If you see a newspaper come out, the first edition, as one example, and it's got a story you should meet, you have to be able to move within a very short time period to get something in the second edition. That does not allow consulting with campaign committees, or even the candidate necessarily. That's why the in-charge person needs to be somebody who is close to the candidate.

Fry: It reminds me of what I've been told about how to fight a forest fire in California.

Dutton: Political campaigns are almost chaotic, illusive things. The public gets the sense that they are well organized and thorough. Actually, they are superficial and frenetic--illusions and symbols, sound and fury. Especially in socially-fluid California. You're giving an illusion of organization; an illusion of grass roots; an illusion of a huge mass of doorbell ringing. I always had the theory that in a California campaign--and we always went out with big efforts, money expenditures and publicity as to doorbell ringing, door to door efforts--that if we reached five percent of the houses in California we were very lucky. The illusional aspect of politics is never adequately looked at.

Fry: Don't you think also that California's politics and political processes are so different from the East where they do have more precinct organization?

Dutton: Yes, historically from the immigrant waves washing ashore on the east coast and east coast society being more organized and structured, but one of my theories about national politics is that for a long time this truism about the East has been less and less true. California-style politics are taking over the country and have been for a long time. The people in the East are much more socially mobile than they used to be. They move around a lot more. There's less partonage and boondoggle to support organizations. There's still more organization in the East than in California.

But I claim that the people in the East who think they've got an organization, or have had anything since the 1940s, are kidding themselves. If you have an organization, as they do in some areas, its incremental usefulness is important, but it is vastly less relevant than media politics. And that is California. California not just in the television era but California in the long newspaper primacy of Hiram Johnson to Earl Warren and Goodie Knight--from the end of the Central (Southern Pacific) dominance through the Republican party, to the advent of TV in politics.

Basically a society in which the people move around a lot, in terms of house moving or apartment dwelling living, and don't identify too much with their local neighborhoods, is made up of people that you cannot fit into a grassroots organization very well. You've got to reach them by other means of communication.

Fry: Fortunately television came along just in time.

Dutton: That's right. Pat is an interesting figure in my opinion, in that he was really--Earl Warren I would say was more of a print media person. He went with television in his last campaign or so, but he, and to a lesser extent, Knight, are really the last of the major California politicians of print politics. Pat started out entirely in print politics, and he used to work the L.A. Times, and the L.A. Examiner, and the San Francisco papers and the McClatchy chain down the Valley to a "fare-thee-well."

Pat's transition from just a print politician to an electronics campaigner was a sign of more flexibility and growth in the man than he sometimes gets credit for. Very early he was beginning to do the local radio interviews, and then the local TV stuff, and long before most other office seekers. Earl Warren in my opinion never caught that as well. Tommy Kuchel, a very bright able guy who should have been transitional like Pat, began to do some TV but was reluctant and had to be dragged into it. Pat was ahead of the pack in deciding that there were new ways to reach those hundreds of thousands of homes.

Thoughts on Stevenson

Fry: Let me back up and ask you if you didn't write an analysis for Arthur Schlesinger at the time, and where it is.

Dutton: Yes, I did. I don't have the slightest idea. I never keep those things. I guess it was in late '55 or early '56. I got a call one day from Arthur Schlesinger--who I had just known from reading a couple of his books, Age of Jackson, The Rise of the New Deal, and from seeing his name in the papers--saying that Stevenson was coming to California and would I write an analysis of what was happening in the state politically.

Fry: Why had he chosen you then?

Dutton: Well, he had to have chose me, my guess is, from Pat.

Fry: Or the L.A. Times?

Dutton: Or the L.A. Times. It could have been the Times, but my guess is that was more corroborative that it was worthwhile calling me.

So in any event, I sat down in the gas company legal offices, of all things, which is arch Republican. I wrote a twelve or fourteen page single-spaced analysis in which I tried to describe the state's power structure, demographic profile, and issue focus. It was less statistical than analytical, which is the way I'm still writing memos. I sent it off, and they liked it very much.

In fact, that silly memo was probably as much my breakthrough to national politics as anything. It was one of the first ones that I did. I sent a copy to Pat, and at the time I thought it was just a big wad of paper.

But from that Stevenson was impressed; and Schlesinger was. Schlesinger flew out a little later and we met in L.A. Also what it did was give me a personal relationship with Stevenson, who I had only seen on TV or in the papers. As you know, he was a substantive person. Relevant here, one of his failings as a politician was that he often jumped over the party leaders and the people really that he should have been paying attention to and was reaching out to individuals like me--idea oriented but with no following.

I don't think I was cultivating him. One never knows how much one is manipulative. But he developed a good, informal working relationship with me by phone and first-hand. When he came to Southern California thereafter, I tended to be the person he wanted to have for his briefings. He talked to all the others, but he'd always take me aside and say, "Now what are we really going to do?" or "What's really the fighting and feuding going on in the party?"

Fry: How did you feel about Stevenson?

Dutton: Oh, he was very much my kind of a politician as I perceived him then. Remember, I was inexperienced; I'm a heavy book reader; I'll say pseudo or quasi-intellectual. He was very much my kind of person. I did think that he was not politic enough, but that was all right.

Another aspect of this applies to Pat, to Stevenson, to anybody in major campaigns. Candidates in a major campaign are so harrassed, time demands on them, pushed and pulled by pressure groups, labor leaders, businessmen, blacks, Jewish community, aides, super ego people, that you finally--especially a young man like I was then--feel sorry for them. You're not only working for them politically, but if you have any sensibilities at all, you really just want to help the human being. He's exhausted at night. He's often humbled if not humiliated in undignified ways.

Stevenson in particular was a very sensitive guy. I reached out to try to be a buffer (he had a bit of a temper) especially when under too much pressure. In Los Angeles some of the fund-givers from the west end, from the Beverly Hills area are so gross and demanding. They want you to kiss their great dane and pet their baby on the fanny and things like that, and that was just not Stevenson's cup of tea. He often did not do what one could call the amenities of politics at all well.

For example, I remember one time in the elevator of the Ambassador Hotel. Bill Blair, who now lives here in Washington, was his main assistant and had traveled with him from Chicago. After being jostled by a crowd of contributors at a reception, Stevenson in the elevator afterwards was just sort of like a little boy with a temper tantrum. He stomped his feet in the elevator and declared he was never going to be humiliated like that again.

Or sometime he would go through a similar group, and people would shove hundred-dollar bills in his pockets, or a thousand-dollar bill. Then they'd say they want this or that. Well, they had already shoved the money in. That offended Stevenson. He thought that the whole charade was beneath human dignity. Yet he still had to bend about things like that.

Pat, in contrast, would take exception to it and it would bother him, but he was more of a political animal. Having to put up with the nonsense, with the embarrassing moments, he could take it. He'd laugh at it. He was not sucked in or warped by it. It didn't give him any kind of psychic wound, but Stevenson it did.

So after that memo I was not just a young faceless guy running a headquarters. I'd be called from Chicago and the East Coast and asked What do I think about this or that development, What do I think of Reston's column in the New York Times (which we'd get a day and a half later)? They started drawing on me for immediate reactions and comments.

Dutton: It was useful and confidence-building in that without any political background, from then on I did not have to be just menial--run a mimeograph machine, help stuff envelopes, distribute brochures, etc. I was beginning to get an identity and relationships of my own. Then I began to try to weave together the principal political figures and reconcile their local political jockeying. It gave me a certain independence.

Stevenson Addresses the California Democratic Council

Dutton: To jump a bit to February of '56. The CDC convention in Fresno, which was always a big deal in California Democratic politics--more in that period than now I guess--illustrates various points. It was important the press focused on it. It was the grassroots people. It was the voice of the more liberal wing of the Democratic party. Conservative Democrats tended to be in the unions and business and not put up much with CDC. But the activist, independent citizen, and the equivalent of the more liberal people now in Common Cause, they all rallied together in the club movement, which Alan Cranston had largely put together beginning in the late forties and early fifties. Pat and Stevenson were more centrist but knew they had to go to the CDC convention. Stevenson flew out from the East for it in '56. Pat went.

But they both--I don't know whether Pat would agree with this--they both also treated the club movement with great wariness. They were trying to play coalition politics and appeal to the liberal Democrats, conservative Democrats, and independent Republicans. To not identify with the club movement would lose workers, kiss off the liberal wing of the party, and appear manipulative that the so-called purist politics of the club movement in California (and I had been in it briefly in the mid fifties after getting to know Pat) was really far more manipulative than the crass politicians. The crass politician tries to bend and adapt, reconcile and be flexible in a complicated situation. In ideological or purist politics, the proponents draw sharp lines, threaten, and try to make others accept their one-sided declarations--or bring the whole temple crumbling down. The result of that is that they get themselves trapped in this or that position, which they too late have to try to reconcile if they are going to go on to other issues, other groupings, other elections. I say this from a liberal Democratic background. I think there is more hypocrisy and rigidity, neuroticness and viciousness in ideological politics of both the left and right than there ever is in so-called interest-group politics.

At the Fresno convention Stevenson and Pat were trying both to identify with the CDC but not identify too much. Stevenson gave a great speech. I don't remember the details, but it was electric.

Dutton: It turned the group on, it gave him the working base to run against Kefauver in California and beat him in the primary. To a great extent Stevenson was far better than Pat at such a gathering. Pat was a little too much a meat and potatoes politician, not a dramatic orator or someone more concerned with ideas than people. Pat was also always concerned with reconciling the group he was before with the rest of the electorate in the outside world. Stevenson wanted the adulation of whatever group he was immediately before. That means he would define his speeches, his content, too much for the audience at hand. But the media carries the speech, and pretty soon it is circulating statewide. Pat was much more able to keep the total situation in perspective even though Stevenson was supposedly the more sophisticated individual.

Fry: How did you compare Stevenson's speech with Kefauver's speech there?

Dutton: I don't think I ever saw it in print, but I think I know what you're getting at. Kefauver's was a masterpiece of political purpose. It was honed for that audience to try to out-liberal Stevenson, to arouse the blacks, even though Kefauver had been from Tennessee and at that stage in his political career had really not meshed fully with California blacks. He'd done better than other southern politicians and carried black areas in his own state. But he could have difficulty in the North.

Kefauver's speech, as I said, was a political masterpiece. The problem with it, I think, is that almost everybody there knew it was a political masterpiece. It was emotional, it was appealing, but it was not entirely credible. It was evocative, but people said, "He's not saying that back in the Senate. He's not saying that back in Tennessee. Why is he saying that here to us right now?" I think that was his undoing, because if you just take his speech on the immediate occasion, it was spectacular. Kefauver was a great showman. [laughs]

Fry: Everybody gave him a rousing response.

Dutton: Yes. It was a bit of a setback for Stevenson in the Kefauver was not expected to do well in the CDC milieu. Here again, this was one of many problems of the CDC or the Fresno conventions. There's too much of a temperature-taking on the one weekend in which the state convention occurs. It's sort of what do you do Monday morning when you wake up or what do you do when you go back to Bakersfield and Del Mar and Redding. Fresno was a great sort of everybody-jazzes-each-other-up. Then when you go back to your neighborhoods and jobs, all those other people who the real voters are not [jazzed up].

It was in this general period that I developed a theory, which I'm fairly sure Pat agrees with and Stevenson and most successful top-of-the-ticket candidates who appeared before the club movement. You want them desperately, but you don't want them to capture you too

Dutton: much, because of the limited range of the ideological spectrum or the fact they are activists, not rank and file Californians. A second point, which I think is terribly important, is they are such a small number that you must not be over-impressed with the immediate group or pressure that is upon you. You've always got to keep in perspective all those millions of Californians back in their neighborhoods and jobs. They're the ones who vote. Don't pay too big a price for your activists, too big a price for your workers. Stevenson could get great intensity out of the base he was in, but he too early isolated himself, in my opinion, from the main part of society.

Pat, on the other hand, could not develop great intensity within a given group, but that actually gave him a much wider range of appeal. One of my theories about politics is--and there are exceptions to it, but it holds true 95 percent of the time or more--the greater the intensity, the narrower the base; the more blandness up to a rather blah point, the broader the base. The trick is not to get too broad a base. If you get 70 to 80 percent, which almost every politician wants--Pat always did--you're beginning to lose commitment to really support you, and get workers for you. So it's a balancing off of intensity and breadth of support that I think is one of the important aspects of winning electoral politics.

Fry: Let me ask you more about the CDC. What actually happened there is that the CDC voted and endorsed Dick Richards over Yorty. Then Yorty decided he would run away.

Dutton: That's correct, which was very predictable.

Fry: Yes, that was planned.

Dutton: Yes, the CDC was a liberal group.

Fry: So was Richards. But when it came to Adlai, there was no endorsement. Instead they signed a paper for him or something.

Dutton: Yes, I'm not sure of the mechanics, but Stevenson went out with all but a modest-sized defecting element of the club movement. It became really the main base that he had.

Fry: You mean he went out from CDC?

Dutton: From Fresno, for the primary campaign. He had the support of its leaders and main elements in effect. The club movement was always more splintered and less influential than the media image of it. I used to think that the L.A. Times, the Chronicle, and some of the other papers focused on the CDC to try to give an appearance that the Democratic party had shifted too left ideologically so they could beat Stevenson in the campaign. The average Californian didn't think

Dutton: of himself as a club movement person. He didn't think of himself as that liberal. So the newspapers would try to define the Democratic candidates--"Oh, look how liberal they are." Whereas the center part of the state was more bland, moderate, non-ideological.

When we went back to Southern California and the campaign, I correctly assumed that from then on we had almost all the club network to rely on, to open headquarters in Alhambra, San Gabriel, etc. That was critical, for there was no real base of that Stevenson campaign in the spring of '56 other than the club movement, in my opinion.

Issue Papers

Fry: I found a letter you wrote to Kent, who was state chairman back in 1955. You said that you were going to begin a monthly newsletter to all the state Democratic clubs with quotes from various Democratic leaders on issues to establish an appearance of cohesiveness. This was September 27, 1955.

Dutton: That early, 1955? Incredible.

Fry: Did you do that?

Dutton: Yes. (I did the same for Lyndon Johnson's 1964 presidential campaign when I was in charge of research and planning that year at the DNC.)

Fry: What was the purpose, to link up a few factions?

Dutton: Yes, well, it was to try to see if we couldn't articulate issue stands in the civil rights field, economic issues, and things like that, on which we could get the club movement people and the Sam Yortys and the John Anson Fords and the other people at least tentatively together. I'd forgotten all about that. I've done that in almost every campaign since. I didn't realize I'd started then. Yes, we did it, but my guess is we didn't start it until January or February.

Another thing, I'm a great believer that you need to--this sounds too cynical; I don't mean it this way--put out "paper" and see that people keep getting material. It's got to have substance. It's got to have some research depth. It has to have some interesting quotes. You don't activate workers and interest them in a campaign unless you show that it has some content. You're not just saying elect A, or make some noise at a rally occasionally. The real workers, the sincere

Dutton: people that make up the club movement rank and file, need to feel that they are issue papers. Those first papers that were done were verbose. The prose was dense. They were not very good. [laughs]

Fry: What sort of feedback did you get on them?

Dutton: I'm not sure. I have only vague recollections. I think they thought that Fred Dutton was more substantive than he was. [laughter] One thing I was doing at the same time which relates to that--here I was this young attorney in the gas company, and I was really spending much of my time clipping newspapers and magazines and pulling together material. I finally ended with more of my filing drawers having newspaper clippings for Democratic use than anything to do with my gas company work. [laughter]

Fry: There was the real headquarters of the Democratic party.

Dutton: No, but a working center. An example was when Jim Finnegan, who was the political boss of Philadelphia and Stevenson's national campaign manager--an old-style Irish organizational campaigner, a lovely human being, but an old-style pol if ever there was one--when he came to Los Angeles to size up what was going on in early '56, he didn't first go to the headquarters. He came to my office in the gas company.

Politics in Black Communities##

Dutton: Jim Finnegan was a gentle human being, intelligent, really concerned with helping people, but at the level of political mechanics pretty cynical and professional and detached. He got out a list of a number of smaller newspapers in California. I don't know where Jim had gotten the lists; through his independent Democratic channels, certainly not from any of us. [laughs] He said, "Now, Fred, you've got to put this amount of advertising in this local newspaper and that amount of money in this congregation and that amount in that congregation, and you'll just be amazed at the support you're going to get." I knew what he was saying. I think I both objected and found it fascinating.

He couldn't have been more correct. [laughs] At least in that political period, certain levels of contributions among some church groups, certain levels of advertising placement got a hell of a lot of support. I've since found out that it was very widespread.

Fry: Your Politics 101, right?

Dutton: Yes.

Fry: I think that must be true. I remember from Helen Gahagan Douglas how utterly surprised she said she was when some members of a black church from L.A. came, expecting something like that.

Dutton: You went to church group by church group. I don't think it went to anything except the church coffers, not to individuals. But it was de rigueur.

Fry: What did you get back precisely, workers?

Dutton: To some extent workers, support, good news space in the local papers, endorsements, all as tangible as politics gets. But the least that we got was workers.

To jump to the end of this, the primary in June of '56, I was terribly concerned--I believed then and do now, in media politics--but I was terribly concerned about the lack of a grassroots operation of any real depth, and particularly in the black neighborhoods. The local black politicians were feuding among themselves to a great extent. As is common, and as is also the pattern, they were then generally not wanting too much of an outside effort made in their neighborhoods, because if you stir up young people or new figures, the dominance of the established pol, whether white or black, goes out the window.

This is true all over the United States. It is why incumbents in general don't want too much political activity in their districts. One of the great reforms we could have now would be to allow all candidates so much free or publicly funded time on TV and radio for exposure. It's the incumbents in Congress who really do not want the FCC [Federal Communications Commission] to make that kind of a mandated reform, because they don't want people challenging them.

Gus Hawkins, who was then and now the senior black politician in Southern California, had gone into the state assembly about the mid-thirties, '34 or '36--an able, dedicated man. He's the Hawkins of the Humphrey-Hawkins bill for full employment. He's now been in Congress a long time. He was one of those in '56 who didn't want too much campaign activity in his assembly district if it was not done by his lieutenants. This was a pre-civil rights movement period and old-style politics; and in fairness to Gus you have to keep it in context. He is much more open now.

In any event, I had not been able to get anywhere getting campaign work going in the black community; I was really tilting with windmills and getting nowhere. They were so much more sophisticated. I got frustrated. I couldn't activate them. They got money from their headquarters, they got money for workers that they supposedly had, and we still got no self-evident activity. We had a certain number of blacks who were working with us, but not a lot.

Dutton: Finally, with the help of a couple of people, I went out to black employment agencies and hired black women to make phone calls, go door to door, etc. I found them intelligent and articulate and hired them and had them allocated to certain high-vote potential neighborhoods. Well, it took Gus Hawkins about two years to get over my uninvited intrusiveness in moving workers into his area. I think my effort also was probably highly ineffective. [laughs] I don't think I'd do it now.

Fry: Did he resent this?

Dutton: Oh boy, did he resent it. He didn't speak to me for a couple of years. That I, a political greenhorn and white, or I, supposedly working within the campaign, would put workers in the black neighborhoods! What business of it was mine? What he kept saying was, "We'll turn out the workers. We'll turn out the voters."

Well, I only had to look at the data on past elections. They didn't turn them out in a high proportional way in those days. We knew that if they turn out, there were overwhelmingly Democratic and overwhelmingly for Stevenson.

Whereas, let's say, in Fresno, some of the white liberals were turned on by Kefauver's demagoguery (perfectly legitimate in politics), none of the blacks were. The blacks are rarely fooled by opportunistic appeals; they have a steady sense of self-interest and loyalty. One shot or short term appeals don't usually make much of a dent with them. So we knew they'd be for Stevenson in the spring of '56. All I thought I had to do was get them out to the polls. So we turned out these workers. But politicians don't like that.

Brown's Decision Not to Run for U.S. Senate

Fry: Were you part of that decision on whether Pat Brown would run for the Senate in 1958?

Dutton: I was involved in it, yes. But that was initially a very loose group. It finally retreated into a small inner core. This is a useful question, particularly in terms of Pat's decision-making. Pat would give the appearance, and I think he was sincere about it, of the broadest possible consultations. In fact, "What should I do?" he would ask of every person he met--shoe shiner and bell man and casual acquaintance, everybody he talked to.

The Chessman case was one of the great examples of Pat's technique in doing that. It blew up in his face. So much of the Chessman case was Pat asking people too much, instead of retreating

Dutton: into his own mind, which he finally did--the agony of drawing out his decision, of confusing the public with questions and implied leanings in all directions, or misleading, of equivocating until the heat was too much to be able to handle. An early decision on that, this way or that way or a third way, would have handled that terrible problem reasonably well.

But the classic politician, as Pat is, almost always wants to put decisions off for something else may solve the problem, or it may go away. They all do it. The technique is--what should I do? What do you think I should do? Everybody likes to be asked. They're flattered.

But whether the question involved, Chessman or, let's say, Pat running for the Senate, there was always lots of man (and woman) in the street consultation. The truth of the matter was, at the same time, the great, gregarious, warm Pat Brown that I love could also calculate in the dark of his closet very carefully. But politics is always a blend of public consultation and private calculation.

So he went through the whole Senate thing, running around asking should he run or shouldn't he run. I don't think Pat ever really intended to run. That was somewhat of a charade. Pat, like a lot of politicians, often made noises that he was interested in every higher job that would come along. It gave him name mention, and was stature-building. Here was a guy who was attorney general, he wasn't even governor yet, identified with running in 1952 for the presidency at least nominally and then, building toward '58, for the Senate. Of course, part of the latter charade by Pat involved his considerable equivocation over whether to run for governor in '58. That was not a cut and dried decision at all at the time.

Pat liked being attorney general. U.S. Webb had held the office for several decades. Pat's underlying self-image was as a lawyer, not a politician. Also, Bernice didn't want him to run basically. I guess most important in Bernice's opinion at that stage was the security and retirement benefits which would accrue if he did not get into higher-risk races. Concurrent with all that, [Ed] Pauley, a long time, key supporter, was trying to avoid Pat having a showdown with Goodie Knight in 1958.

Fry: Pauley was trying to push Pat to the Senate in '56?

Dutton: To the Senate, that's correct. Pauley had been a financial backer in getting Pat into national politics. Partly he was flattering Pat, partly he liked Pat very much, and partly Pauley was trying to ride the Goodie Knight-Pat Brown horses simultaneously and make sure his two horses weren't on a collision course. Pauley also kept close to Bill O'Connor, Pat's main deputy in the mid-50s.

Fry: Was he supporting Goodie Knight for governor?

Dutton: Oh, yes, very strong supporter for Goodie Knight.

There were other people working toward the same objective. It was not just conservatives like Pauley. There were others who thought Pat was needed in the Senate, and was the only person who could get elected statewide.

Fry: I wondered if it was partly a stop Yorty--

Dutton: Perhaps. But Congressman Clair Engle wanted to run for the Senate, could stop Yorty, ran and won. Some people pushed Pat toward the Senate to get him out of California. There were a lot of liberals that didn't like Pat that much. That was forgotten after he became governor. There were a lot of people who thought Pat Brown too conservative, too independent, not a real party man. Pat established his liberal credentials really only after he became governor.

You go back and look at the clips or what the political commentators, Kyle Palmer and Earl Behrens and ones like that, were saying in the fifties. Pat was known as a fairly conservative Democrat who occasionally would make liberal noises.

Fry: Speaking as he was from his attorney general chair?

Dutton: Well, from his attorney general chair, Pat just wasn't that. For example, if you look at the '54, '55, '56 period, at the newspaper clippings particularly in Southern California, you'd identify Pat as an anti-drug, anti-crime politician than a pro-economic and social liberal politician. Pat got into economic and social issues with considerable wariness initially.

Fry: He had both water and oil issues all the way through his attorney generalship.

Dutton: Yes. But in rather legal and established modes. What I'm saying, I guess, is that I always thought the Senate possibility was a charade. Pat was probably sincere, but an effective politician often thinks and projects that he's moving towards an objective, when the truth of the matter is he's only making a pass at it and never intends to really come to grips with it.

Fry: Did anybody expect to win [a Senate race] against Bill Knowland, who was so well ensconced? He had won both primaries the last time he ran.

Dutton: No. Pat never ran for things idly. Early in his career he may have run for "exposure" at times. But by the mid-50s, he was getting up the greasy pole and only ran to win. Not only that, only if he had a pretty sure thing.

Eclecticism and Non-Ideological Politics

- Fry: Did Yorty bother people very much? According to my notes he did have a certain backing in Southern California with the CIO's [Johnny] Despol.
- Dutton: That's right.
- Fry: Elizabeth Snyder, Joseph McEnery, I think deSilva in labor, and all the anti-CDC people probably collected around--
- Dutton: Johnny Despol is interesting. He was probably more liberal and more substantive than the CDC ever thought of being.
- Fry: Why did he back Yorty?
- Dutton: I don't know. It probably had something to do with local labor politics. He feuded for the CIO with Neil Haggerty and the more conservative, pragmatic AFC leadership. Remember, Yorty had been in the state legislature a long time, pretty adept politician, and he had been in Congress. Yorty represented in my opinion--and I was not for him--a larger mass of rank and file people in Southern California than Dick Richards ever did. Dick Richards represented the activist, liberal Democrats. Dick, as he moved along, broadened his base, but people from liberal political backgrounds have to be very careful that they don't think that most of those people out there are liberal or conservative. They're neither. They're just trying to take care of their lives, families and local problems. Yorty played on that political base, a non-ideological base. Liberals said he was conservative. I would say he was opportunistic. He could be all over the infield.

You go back and look at Sam Yorty for example in the mid-thirties to the mid-fifties. When he went to the state legislature he was one of the most far-out liberals. He was thought of as sort of nearing leftish in the terms of those days. Several years later he was a key guy in the state Un-American Activities Committee investigations in the assembly. He was just all over the place.

Now that eclecticism, I'm afraid, is what our society really is and is all about. Some of us who try to impose a bit of an ideological imprint on it, I guess are the artificial ones. Ideology can conceptually and politically be useful; but it is not the stuff of most day-to-day living.

Estes Kefauver

Fry: Stevenson was trying to appear closer to the political center in the '56 primary because he had just had a surprise upset in Minnesota, where he was supposed to win. Instead Kefauver won it.

Dutton: Yes, Stevenson flew out to California the second morning after that setback. We thought that might be the beginning of the end. It was early enough in the process.

Privately--as I didn't learn until later, even as late as '59 or early '60--Stevenson was a much more conservative man than some of his speeches made out. He was not unequivocally enthusiastic about the civil rights movement and blacks--though in fairness, he was largely unequivocal about most issues. He saw the complexity of society. He was against discrimination, but he questioned the idea that those things could be solved by legislation or political crusading. It was not just that he didn't believe in it because it didn't get votes; philosophically he also seemed to have had problems with it. Stevenson, remember, had been a man who inherited some money. His law practice in Chicago represented a number of conservative interests. He had a rather orthodox, establishment rearing--Princeton, etc. I think a lot of us in the fifties thought that he was much more liberal than he actually was. That came to me as a great surprise. [laughs]

Fry: In this campaign it looked like he was having trouble with the people in the San Joaquin Valley because Kefauver was out-doing him there.

Dutton: Yes, but that was a cultural thing. Central Valley Democrats then were a little bit rough-edged, attracted to the old America of Kefauver's coonskin cap; Okies, Arkies who by that stage had gotten fairly prosperous. I think one has to be careful to keep political and ideological perceptions independent of cultural perceptions, though they all come to bear in politics. Stevenson loved to think he was a farmer from Belleville, Illinois. But he was much more a Princetonian and Chicago lawyer. Kefauver, oh, he could go through Bakersfield, Merced and Los Angeles County with a charming affinity. Despite its urbaness, Los Angeles County is still a bit of the rural Midwest in many ways.

Fry: Those Iowans.

Dutton: That's right. Stevenson's win in '56, in the primary, I think was because the liberal Democratic base turned out more than the conservative and non-ideological base, as often occurs in a California primary. Stevenson had a lot more support from the media. We also had a better-financed, better-organized, more prominently-led

Dutton: campaign. Stevenson, in addition, gave California a tremendous amount of attention. Kefauver spread himself too thin. Kefauver had homey strengths but also terrible defects as a politician.

Fry: Yes, I wondered why he didn't come off any better.

Dutton: Probably Kefauver was a bit of the older America that was fading, implicitly the Jacksonian stage of our politics, and perhaps the Truman stage. Populist, down to earth, but a bit opportunistic and transparent about it, in my opinion. A dear man. Just at the level of campaign technique, he was colorful, even demagogic when he had to be, absolutely inexhaustible in his energies. But he was also too personalized and not substantive enough at that stage. He had been able to communicate himself with the symbol of the coonskin cap and the anti-crime hearings. But then when he would get out and campaign--take California--he thought he could all do it alone, he didn't realize the extent to which he really had to project substantively through the mass media and have organization, that his day-to-day campaigning wasn't all that important in a big, mass electorate like California or nationwide.

A lot of candidates still think that. A lot of candidates think that all they have to do is get out there and meet a lot of people. But if they work for fifty years, twenty-four hours a day, they're going to meet less than 1 percent of the electorate, other than through the papers and television. But a lot of them don't get that, and Kefauver was one of those who didn't, despite his early sense of symbolism with the coonskin hat and his big break with the nationally publicized crime hearings.

Fry: That's ironic, isn't it, because he got his start by television in the congressional hearings.

Dutton: But then you get back to the campaigns, and he was still doing like he had done in Tennessee, a rural, sparsely populated state in which he could reach all the electorate.

The Coming of Media Politics

Fry: I think this was the campaign where Stevenson had thirty-minute programs on television in California. I've heard that he wasn't very effective with those.

Dutton: No, he wasn't. That was just the opening stage in which spot TV commercials were first coming in. Stevenson resisted those as undignified, demeaning, and not giving him an opportunity to speak.

Dutton: Stevenson was essentially a Chautauqua candidate. He wanted to go thoroughly into a problem. He wanted some high rhetoric. He was educational. He wasn't politically crystalizing.

The long programs were ineffective. One, as we know now, twenty-eight minutes is too long for television. The public doesn't want to look at someone just talking. It's a static setting. Those of us who were involved, we knew it and told him. But he felt he would be stooping too low if he did not give full speeches. He was a beautiful prose writer, not a poet--and good politicians are closer to poets.

Other problems were that Stevenson would come in the state harrassed, harried. He always insisted on doing his own speeches. He had Arthur Schlesinger, Ken Galbraith, John Bartlow Martin, the best stable of speechwriters available; but he would throw away their speeches and have verbal tantrums in the hotel room before he'd go out. Particularly, if he would finally take Arthur, John's or Ken's speeches, he would use them as throwaway pieces for minor audiences. Anything that was important, he had to do. He had to write it longhand and endlessly revise it. For example, those TV programs. He was not thinking about: did he look cool, composed, relaxed, self-assured with the audience; did the audience have a sense that he really had a certain inner poise and things like that. He was closer to frenetic, and right up to the time he would go on the air he was preoccupied revising his speech.

Remember, he had been a speechwriter in politics originally, and he never really outgrew it. He never moved entirely from the speechwriter to the speech-giver. We admired him for that. He was a brilliantly eloquent, articulate person. But candidates don't have to be that. The candidate, when you finally get up there before the public, whether on TV or an audience, must communicate not only words and ideas but a certain bunch of implicit human qualities--strength, humor, vigor, poise--which are just as important as the ideological messages he is sending out. Stevenson could have had the best content in the world, but the vibes at the unconscious level were of a harried, frenetic, often fatigued man. Those thirty minute TV things were classic examples of that.

For example, in the Valley a couple of times we tried call-in shows, which were terribly unpopular in that period in political campaigns. Stevenson didn't like them at all. Most politicians--like Pat Brown--love them. You don't have to think in advance. You're turned on by the question. It's fairly close to one on one, even though a lot of other people are listening. Stevenson thought, "They ask stupid questions. They really don't want me to talk about the subjects I want to talk about. I've got to keep answers down to two or three or five minutes at most. I need to talk about something at much more length."

Fundraising for Stevenson

Fry: The primary had such an uneven result; Stevenson got a 1,139,000, almost 1,400,000 votes, and Kefauver got only 680,000.

Dutton: Yes. We were better financed, among several sources of strength.

Fry: Where did you get money for Stevenson? Who were the moneybags?

Dutton: The Jewish community essentially. Remember in L.A.--it is true now, and it was true in that period--is one of the wealthy communities in the country, a comparatively small group of very wealthy people, like in New York city. The Jewish community is politically aware, always has been, and is involved, I think, out of genuine citizen responsibility and ethical concern, not just for immediate crass purposes. Some of that comes out of the ethical emphasis of the Jewish culture; some is the result of a high educational level and affluence; some is the consequence of a minority group protecting and asserting itself; some is more status-seeking than interest-seeking. Key individuals give generously.

In the same period the Paul Douglasses, the Wayne Morses, the Hubert Humphreys, the Kefauvers, the Frank Churches, the Mike Mansfields, a whole bunch of people, were going to that community in Los Angeles for Senate campaign financing from all over the United States.

Here's an example. It is an interesting anecdote. In 1956, the U.S. Senate Democratic Campaign Committee, raising money for Senate campaigns all over the United States, had Mike Mansfield in charge. He was going to come out to California, sponsored by Stevenson, to help the Stevenson campaign, speak, and raise some money for both Stevenson and his Senate committee. Ed Pauley said that he wanted to raise some money, and that he'd sure like to have Mike Mansfield. Remember that Mike Mansfield was in a key position relevant to the oil industry. So Pauley said, "Oh, let's have a big fancy party at my house out in Beverly Hills."

Mansfield flew down from Montana under the sponsorship of the Stevenson committee. I met him at the airport. We went to a party at Pauley's house. Pauley had the top blue blood businessmen of Southern California. Ed collected the checks and the money, and he had them made out to some special intermediate committee, which was not uncommon then. After the dinner was over with, Pauley didn't give a dime of the money to Stevenson, because he was not for him. He sent it all to the U.S. Senate Democratic Campaign Committee. It made Stevenson livid. This is just a little bit of an example of the manipulations that occur.

Dutton: Mansfield was annoyed about it, but couldn't say too much since he got money for the Senate races. But he had come to help Stevenson, to raise money for him. He, Stevenson, and I, and everybody, were completely sandbagged by Ed Pauley, who thought it was rather charming and funny. [laughter]

Fry: Adolph Schuman's name keeps coming up.

Dutton: He was a very San Francisco fund-raiser. He was an old of Pat Brown's. He'd first made money in the women's clothing business and then in other things later on. Schuman, Ben Swig, Ed Heller--they were key to San Francisco Democratic money, as Walter Shorenstein is now. Each of these men really needs to be considered differently.

Schuman was new wealth, Heller was quiet old wealth. Schuman had specific focus. Heller had a broad outlook. Ben Swig had come out from Massachusetts where his father had been speaker of the house there, made money in the East, bought the Fairmont Hotel, and was a Republican until the mid-50s. He, as I recall, in '56 for example, wanted to support Pat and help Pat because he saw him coming along as a possible governor as well as friend.

In any event, if one would look at Ben from the mid-fifties to the seventies, when he began to get too elderly to be very active, here's a businessman, not a politician, the most sensitive barometer of where election trends are going. If you watch them, you can tell better than from polls and betting odds and everything else like that. They're very intuitive calibrators of how these things are going. Northern California fund-raising had a few key fund-raisers, plus labor, then scattered others. Southern California money was much more diffuse.

In the 1950s in Southern California, there was substantial Jewish fund-raising, but there were just a few centralizing sources until the 1960s. Labor gave a little bit, but there was no business community whatsoever on the Democratic side for all practical purposes except some movie, oil and liquor people. We had some public soliciting through ads and radio pitches but those were never very effective. In the '50s (unlike the '60s) Southern California lagged behind the north. So Ben Swig, Bill Roth, and Ed Heller--all from northern California--decided they were going to come down to Southern California and broaden the financial base. Northern California Democratic politics was much better funded than Southern California Democratic politics at this time.

Ed Heller was the senior member. They spent a full day and talked with the Beverly Hills fund-raisers, some of the labor leaders, and some businessmen. I remember Heller saying and Swig saying afterward, "We're never going south of the Tehachapis again. Down south they're so full of petty feuding and crassness and so forth." And they didn't.

Dutton: Then they also said, "We are never again going to send any northern California money down south. We don't care how much Stevenson or Pat Brown needs it down there, northern California money stays in northern California." It was illustrative of how much California then, as now is two separate states, two separate political systems, and not just in the broad generalization but when it gets down to the nitty-gritty of fund-raising. The Tehachapi Mountains are a real dividing line.

What I was going to say though about L.A. fund-raising--there was actually a lot of money in southern California, but an awful lot of it went national.

Fry: That was true of that period?

Dutton: True then, all through that period. It's true now; it's true today.

Fry: It does seem to be where the national fund-raisers head for.

Dutton: Absolutely. Roger Stevens, who is now head of the Kennedy Center here, was Stevenson's chief national fund-raiser. He was out of New York, and he had put together a real estate fortune. Roger, while still a young man, I think with no college education, out of Detroit, got into real estate. Finally he made it fairly big. He went to New York and became a very big New York real estate operator. He found out in New York that there are a lot of investors who want not just money but status and even culture. They will invest more if they feel that something really worthwhile and important is going on. Roger was interested also in serious drama and became a major producer of serious plays. He found out that he could make bigger real estate deals if he could also offer some of the big investors a piece of a serious play--and he could greatly help the theatre at the same time. Then he made a three-way parlay by helping liberal candidates from his investing and theatre sources. That way, he became Stevenson's finance chairman. He later helped JFK, LBJ and a number of others that way. JFK appointed him head of the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., where he has been since the early 60s. I suggested the appointment after getting to know him in the 1956 campaign when I was a presidential assistant in 1961.

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Dutton: The chief source of labor money for the '56 Stevenson southern California campaign were Johnny Despol of the CIO and Joe deSilva of the Retail Clerks' Union. One wanted unions as much for money as for workers, for which their reputation was better than their actual performance. The questionable nonsense in fund-raising then is indicated by this episode: Stevenson had been fairly close to Jake Arvey, and Arvey sent a lieutenant out just before the primary with a huge number of buttons to give out, stamped "Precinct Captain." We had a few precinct captains, and the label was more a stigma in California-style politics. The gift became a joke.

Dutton: Then, not long before the November election, he returned with what could only be called a black bag. It had several hundred thousand dollars in cash. The national labor leadership wanted to help Stevenson, but national labor money could not go into national presidential campaigns except under major restrictions and reporting. And nobody was going to violate the law, and I emphasize that. What they wanted was to give it to state Democratic races, where it supposedly would be legal, if potential state-level contributors would then give nationally. The money was even available cut-rate. But no exchange was possible in the circumstances and the little black bag was finally returned east.

We were so broke. We were going to get clobbered in the election. I've jumped now to October. We could not raise the money. We were broke. We were going to get overwhelmed, as we did. Hi [Arvey's lieutenant] was in San Francisco, and he peddled that money to the Ben Swigs and others like that; he came down to southern California. We couldn't take advantage of it, heartbreaking because we desperately needed the money for television and newspaper ads. It's an example of very large amounts of money then moving around in cash.

Paul Ziffren

Fry: I wanted to ask you about the connections with Chicago. Paul Ziffren I think was national committeeman at the time.

Dutton: That's right, very bright able guy.

Fry: He had been Jake Arvey's law partner or something? Did he have close connections?

Dutton: He was a personal friend. Paul came out of the Midwest, Northwestern Law School and had been in the U.S. Attorney's Office and made a reputation as a prosecutor. Then we went to private practice, then moved to southern California and became one of the couple best tax lawyers in the movie industry; still is. I'd gotten to know him in '53, '54, worked with him, liked him very much.

But Paul and I later developed a somewhat strained friendship because, from my perspective, he was interested primarily in intra-party roles, policies, relationships and such, but not so much in actual campaigns. The Helen Douglas campaign was an exception to that. But he illustrates a leadership elite more interested in intra-party power than in winning elections. In response, he might say the latter are too much a blurring, compromising process. Paul seemed to be more intent on the maneuvers going into a campaign, such as who has the key positions.

Dutton: Once it gets down to the nitty-gritty of day-to-day schedules and organizational politics, I was critical of Paul, as he knows, because I felt he faded away a bit. He wanted to set the mold of a campaign, but then he didn't want to give all that much energy and time to the follow-through. He had a hell of a great law practice, and I can understand; but I was also critical.

Paul had a philosophy (it's legitimate) that a given campaign, a given election is only a small thing in a longer trend of developments. So he was as much always trying, let's say, to push liberalism or his wing of the Democratic party. On the contrary, I've always thought that in a campaign, at least for a few months or the election year, you drop intra-party jockeying. That is not the time for maneuvering within a party base. That's the time for winning the election, and then see later what you can do about it. For me the historical process changes from party maneuver to winning the election. You may weave back and forth between two different kinds of efforts. But for Paul a campaign seemed to be a time to press his faction, his group, his viewpoints. If it causes difficulty for the campaign, if you alienate the conservatives, if it embarrasses the candidate, that's too bad, for there are larger-term trend lines at work.

Thoughts on Party Offices

Fry: During that post-primary Casa Munras meeting of the delegation in Monterey, I think Elizabeth Snyder tried to unseat Paul Ziffren.

Dutton: That's correct, which is basically the liberals versus the conservative wing of the party. It was also the 1930s and '40s politics and politicians which Liz represented, the old school trying to unseat the people who had come up in the Helen Douglas period in the late '40s and early 1950s.

Fry: And the CDC types?

Dutton: The CDC types, yes. So, one can talk in terms of time layers, cultural types, of ideologies, of just individual personal ambitions. Somebody like me for example, I was mainly interested at that stage in holding the damn thing together--I had a new role, a functional use, and no faction to identify with--a strength and weakness in the situation.

Fry: I wondered what you were doing, because it looked like it was going to fall apart.

Dutton: Yes, exactly. I was much less interested in who was national chairman. My position or attitude in that was one of the reasons I developed a long-term relationship with Pat, because he and I had the

Dutton: same outlook on all this. One: are the intra-party positions really that important? What the hell difference does it make who's national committeeman or state chairman? Why do these people have these bloody fights that the Republican press take advantage of, show Democratic disunity and incompetence, grasping, and so forth like that? You could put a robot in most of the jobs, and it would be almost as good. The job doesn't have that much importance, that much significance. But these poeple that got interested fought out their global, Philosophical views in terms of who was going to be state chairman, or county chairman or club secretary.

Fry: Clara Shirpser also had her battle at the same time at Monterey.

Dutton: Yes, As I recall, Clara had been a Kefauver person. I was for Clara--it would show that the Kefauver people were moving back into the party and the general election campaign structure. After a primary election you try to put together the factions and rebuild strength for the general election.

Fry: You were having a lot of half delegates. I think everybody was a half of a delegate.

Dutton: Yes. We wanted to get everybody into the act.

Fry: In order to bring in the Kefauver people?

Dutton: Well, to bring in the Kefauver, but just to bring in all kinds of people. Labor thought it was under-represented. The blacks thought they were under-represented. Yes, getting the Kefauver people in was one thing, but it was also getting a lot more camels' noses under the tent. There are the politics of coalition and the politics of definition--or of divisiveness. Both are prefectly legitimate. Both are used to a great extent. When do you sharpen an issue? When do you blur an issue? When do you broaden a base? When do you try to intensify the support, the activism within it? I think there are a lot of people in the business world--I saw Norton Simon this way--who really make their headway by clarifying decisions.

One of the cliches in conventional politics is politics is addition, not subtraction or not division. But at each of these set situations, for example the Monterey meeting, how much are you fighting for your faction and how much are you fighting for overall unity? The Pat Browns are always fighting for overall unity. Pat wants love from 99 percent of the people. There's a big difference between playing internal party politics and trying to play electoral or public politics. This is one of the reasons Pat, for example, generally stayed away from internal party maneuvering. He never saw that it got him any votes at all with the public. Much of the public just thinks a plague on all partisans.

- Fry: Ziffren must have done some work in the background. For instance, right here in what we're talking about, he won by a very, very large margin.
- Dutton: Yes, but that's because it was a Stevenson, club-movement base. The cards were stacked to begin with. Pat's greatest instinct in a situation like that was not to see who won but just not to get himself involved in it. He would go on to the next battle, having everybody liking him. Pat was greatest in knowing when to move away from fights, not move into them. After he became governor, he reversed that somewhat.
- Fry: Would he have gotten on the phone to try to line up votes or anything like that?
- Dutton: Generally, no. I'm sure Pat could cite a few examples in which he did, but I think an honest comment is that Pat tried to avoid those fights. He saw nothing to be gained for himself or winning elections. And I think he didn't find it that interesting.
- Same thing with Hiram Johnson in 1910, after capturing his own party--then turned to "party" reform to minimize "intra-moralism." Also Earl Warren to a great but not complete extent did not want to take bruises and public scars from internal party politics.
- Fry: I think Pat Brown left the CDC convention early, and I figured he was trying to give it a light--
- Dutton: The classic, most extreme example of Pat's career was in 1954, when he was the Democratic candidate for attorney general and Dick Graves was the Democratic gubernatorial candidate. Pat was a sure winner because the L.A. Times and similar sources endorsed him, but Pat kept his distance during the campaign except for a few self-protecting joint appearances, then just before the election went off to Mexico so as he wouldn't have to be too close to Graves. [laughs]
- Fry: Or somewhere.
- Dutton: The last week of the election he didn't want to have pictures taken for all the papers and on television with the other Democratic candidates, all of whom were going to go down in defeat. He just got out of the state.

Self Evaluation: Dutton's Eight-Year Rise

- Fry: Here are the names of the officers of the delegation that I suppose were elected at that Monterey meeting.

Dutton: Yes. For example, I was secretary to the delegation. Well, I was Pat's guy in effect. In effect, I had emerged by the spring as the guy running the southern California campaign, not just the executive director with four chairmen over him, but the person who actually was. But I'd have to say I was strictly a functionary. All these other people were wanting to run for public office, or they had ego problems of their own. I think, at least at that stage in my life--

Fry: In other words, they saw it as a link to their political aspirations.

Dutton: Yes, and to be honest with you, I was too new and green to be a threat of any kind. I never thought about running for office at any point in my life, which also gave me a lot of running room, because I was non-competitive with candidate-types. I've got my ego and wants, but it has never been to run for office. I did not need publicity. In fact, I seem to have psychic problems about too much publicity. [laughs]

Fry: That gives historians problems too. [laughter] We can't find you very well.

Dutton: I'm a great believer in staying out of it.

I don't want to pseudo-psychoanalyze myself, but I think it would be fair to say I probably have power needs, out of whatever neurotic personality is deep down, but they are needs for effect on a situation. Perhaps of an illusory (and quite untrue) sense of contrast rather than projections. But this is too complex for a passing comment. I think there are a fair number of people like this. The Pat Browns and these other people never entirely understood that. [laughter]

Fry: Were they ever suggesting that you run for office?

Dutton: No, and I never thought about it, quite frankly. I bubbled up in California politics so fast--'54 a tiny bit; '56 substantially; '58 statewide in charge; '59 to the governor's chief aide and advisor; then in '60 to Washington, D.C. When I was in California a few people talked about my going back into something elective, but I fell in love with Washington. I liked it very much. I had a marriage break up, and I stayed there, which is not a place from which to try lower level California ambitions. This sounds terribly introspective, and I'm not much of an introspective person. I enjoy trying to pull a large number of facts, ideas and people into some kind of manageable tentative context or relationship, whether through politics, writing, or other endeavors. Perspective and relationship are important to me. Those are the things that really charge me. Also, I don't suffer fools gladly. When I'm bored I easily show it. Now these people who are candidates, they're able to mask their feelings. When I'm angry, or depressed, or this or that, it's fairly clear in my face.

Fry: No amount of handshaking can help.

Dutton: Yes. I didn't need it. I got enough ego advancement and all that from going quickly from a nobody in southern California, to Stevenson, to running Pat's campaign, to the governor's office, to the White House, and State Department. Then in charge of Bob Kennedy's personal campaign in '68, now an international law practice and all the key issues involving Saudi Arabia.

Fry: You can't beat that.

Dutton: Every two years some big move from the mid-'50s to the mid-'60s, then a slighter, better pace.

Fry: You and Nixon. [laughs]

Dutton: I just went along with the darned thing. I never really thought about it.

Brown and Campaign Mechanics

Fry: In the Democratic convention, you were chairman of the delegation?

Dutton: No, I was secretary--

Fry: Yes, secretary of the delegation. You had some unity problems--

Dutton: Pat was the chairman, but Pat didn't want to get involved in combative negotiations and the details. I was his guy. That was why I was chosen secretary, to a great extent. Therefore I really was a surrogate in effect. I had to defer to guys like Clair Engle, Chet Holifield, all kinds of people, but so long as I was sort of a respectful young man, I had many of the problems and possibilities in my hand--more than I was probably competent to have.

Pat didn't give much attention to those things. I have to keep re-emphasizing that. Until after being elected governor, Pat was never a party politician, no matter what he thinks. Pat gave up intra-mural campaign mechanics as early as '48 or '50. It was always other people.

One of the great talents, I think we touched on this before, of most successful politicians--Pat's a classic example, Kennedy, Johnson --is getting other people, your staff, your family, your supporters to believe they have to take care of you, to save you from yourself, to do all the terrible work. Pat is absolutely a master at that. [laughs] He still is. Part of his supposed disorganization and disingenuousness and all that, is really Pat Brown laying it on somebody else to help him.

Civil Rights and the 1956 Convention

- Fry: He and you had two big problems in the convention in keeping people together. One was the civil rights issue and what stand the people were going to take on the Supreme Court decision, the Brown v. Board of Education. The other problem was the selection of the nominee for vice-president after Adlai Stevenson was nominated. Which one did you want to take first, the Lehman amendment to the majority plank?
- Dutton: You know much more about this now than my recollection. I remember the fight.
- Fry: You had Richard Richards, Elizabeth Snyder, and Jimmy Roosevelt wanting a more liberal civil rights plank that what the convention committee had come up with.
- Dutton: Yes. But my recollection is not deep in this. I think Pat and I saw it, quite frankly, in terms of trying to hold the convention together and the impression on the general public back in California. We were not as willing as Dick Richards and Jimmy Roosevelt--Liz Snyder to a lesser extent--to make this a great, all-out fight on one issue. We thought the one issue had to fit into all kinds of other issues and the net final synthesis spread before the electorate. This is relevant because it's true of every political situation. How much do you focus on one issue? Now, in 1980, we have one-issue politics run rampant.
- Fry: Also you had that Damocles' sword hanging over your head, that the southern delegates would walk out if you made the plank too strong.
- Dutton: As they really did, for all practical purposes. If you look at the subsequent campaign and election, they did walk out. I guess the argument against us would be that we knew we weren't going to win. Stevenson wasn't going to beat Eisenhower. But you're never willing to admit that before an election, if deeply involved in it, at least I'm not. I see no point in being in the election if I don't think we're going to pull it out successfully.
- Fry: But in California did you really think that, because Stevenson really out-polled Eisenhower in a number of votes in the primary?
- Dutton: No, I thought we were going to get clobbered. The Kefauver-Stevenson primary got a maximum vote turnout.
- Fry: And he didn't have a fight--
- Dutton: He didn't have a fight, so the Republicans really didn't turn out. If you look at '64, the Rockefeller-Goldwater fight on the Republican side brought a very large turnout which looked like it would have

Dutton: given Johnson problems. But it really didn't. It was just that a fight develops a turnout. One of my little theories in politics is, if democracy is involving the public, then you should welcome the fights in each of these situations. Candidates, however, generally don't agree with that. At a more theoretical level, I also believe stimulating the process is a legitimate end in itself. How much is the democratic process an end in itself, in involving the public, and how much is the outcome of the election the main object? I think you have to keep sort of playing those in balance.

Fry: So you weren't deluded about that?

Dutton: No, I wasn't deluded about the '56 outcome. My role in that one and certainly Pat's was--we were rebuilding the parts and at the convention seeking to be reconcilers. I will say to you, and I will say it very vehemently--not that I believed in civil rights any less than Jimmy Roosevelt or Dick Richards; but one of the places I find politics disillusioning is the extent to which the people who really have personal ambitions mount these big ideological or philosophical or civil rights crusades. They suddenly look more pure when actually it's often just the opposite. There is also basic value in holding things together and making a situation functionally coherent.

Fry: And make it workable.

Dutton: And make it workable, yes. Politics to some extent is defining issues and problems. To some extent it's just social glue, holding the party, the society, the situation together. How much of each of those functions you fulfill--I think you strike a balance at a given point in time.

In any event, in the Brown v. Board of Education situation, Pat and I, I would have to say, were explicit supporters but were also trying to tell people, "Don't get this out of perspective with other things."

Fry: There was a very confused balloting that took place among the California delegates on the floor. I think it was only resolved by Chairman Sam Rayburn's banging the gavel.

Dutton: Yes. This was true of that delegation, as of most California delegations. They are rather eclectic, disorganized, and even incompetent. Now why are they incompetent? They are often inept and an embarrassment in national conventions. There are various reasons. One, because Californians and California politics are so undisciplined or free-form, like the society. Two, the size of the delegation compared to other states is very large. Three, it does not have an organizational network. There's all kind of factional maneuvering. (Jimmy Carter to this day cannot begin to figure out

Dutton: California politics. He thinks that all you have to do is appoint a chairman or get five key people in a room and they'll get together.) The secret of California Democratic politics for a gubernatorial or presidential candidate is to ride four or five different horses at once and don't expect them to necessarily get together. It's like a Ben Hur chariot, but don't tell the two horses to get into the same gait, just let them run loosely, awkwardly, but as fast and as much as possible.

Fry: How were the original Adlai Stevenson delegates selected?

Dutton: There were meetings very early in '56. Two processes were going on. One, local people in the club movement and some Democratic county central committees were trying to make sure they got somebody on. Or they had an assertive personality that wanted to get on. Then there were statewide figures like Don Bradley, Roger Kent, Libby [Gatov], people like that who wanted to get some kind of balance. Out of all that came all kinds of names. (The final selection was made privately by a few people.) I was present but not terribly active because I didn't yet know the grassroots or county by county very well. The key people in that one were Libby, Roger and Don, and somewhat Alan Cranston on another tier. Then from the south, Paul [Ziffren] (not Liz Snyder because they excluded her as much as they could), Johnny Despol, and others. My guess is that it finally got onto shifting groupings of fifteen or eighteen in all.

Pat would not get into something like that. Pat would just want to make sure that he and maybe a few names were on. Here again, it's an example: Pat didn't get into such nitty-gritty, not only in terms of personalities, or county by county. I'd criticize Pat that I didn't think he gave enough attention to what is the liberal-conservative balance or what is the statewide spread and things like that. But the mechanics of politics bored him. He also thought there was more damage to be done than gained from getting deeply into it.

Fry: Did you see that then?

Dutton: I was somewhat involved. I was in the process and I went to the meetings, but I was just not as conversant with the names and faces as someone like Don and Libby and Roger and Paul.

Fry: So they finally gathered up and made the selection.

Dutton: Yes. You finally have to put a bunch of names down on a piece of paper. The key person, as I vaguely recall, in that one was certainly Don Bradley, much more than anybody else. Oh, Bill Roth up north and Jack Abbott. I think the fullest background on all this you'll get from Don.

Fry: And the officers are elected, is that right, like at the Monterey meeting?

Dutton: That's correct.

Fry: I wanted to ask you a little detail there. Byron Rumford, who later had the Rumford Fair Housing Act and was one of the leading blacks in the north, at some point--I don't know if it was this year or in subsequent years--felt he had been left out of a seat that he wanted, either in the Democratic party or in the delegation. Do you recall that?

Dutton: Yes, I do recall that. But I'm not sure which year it was. He threw what I vaguely recall was somewhat of a temper tantrum about the damn thing--not before the press, but I mean personally--that he had been ignored.

I have two recollections on that. Don Bradley could give you the best detail. On the one hand I think that Don, Libby, and Roger were not that fond of Byron. There was a bit of intramural factionalism in the north. Two, Byron was respectfully--well he just went along with things, didn't try to assert himself. Then he overreacted, having failed to signal early what he wanted in more than a perfunctory way, when he didn't get it. My guess is that the people who made that decision, they thought "Well, it's not a big deal. It's not going to be the end of the world." Therefore they were working out other considerations. Then Byron blew his stack when he didn't get what he thought he was entitled to. To me all that is not very important. It's part of the fun and games of Democratic politics.

Fry: This is what you were talking about.

Dutton: Exactly. I think the Pat Browns keep those things in some kind of perspective. The papers may make a big issue of it. It may be a front-page story. The only damage is done when it's used as a signal to the larger society that the Democrats, or some other group, doesn't know how to get together to provide coherent leadership.

Fry: I have a couple of things I've collected from the newspapers to show you. Here's an August 16 story on the California delegation fight over civil rights. Here's your August 14 memo on the civil rights plank to Elizabeth Snyder and--

Dutton: John Moss. They were members of the platform committee then. You know, I don't recall anything about it. My signature hasn't changed. [laughs] I never thought that was too big of a fight. People felt strongly both ways, It was more a question of the activists, blacks, more liberal people, trying to overcome the inertia of let's say the Pat Browns as he was perceived then, before he became governor.

Fry: I was interested in this as a process, because I wondered why it hadn't been settled better in a delegation caucus so that you didn't have to poll after you got there with everybody out on the floor.

Dutton: I'm not sure. I don't know why now. I can think of several reasons, after the fact. One, Pat Brown in particular and politics in general try to put off everything until the last possible minute, thinking the convention will resolve this or decide it and we don't have to take a stand.

Two, those conventions, and particularly the '56 one, were chaotic, disorganized. We had a couple of meetings; I remember the organizing meeting in Chicago after we got there. We spent the whole time organizing. All the people who think they've got to stand up and make speeches--these are the part of politics which to me are endlessly boring. What do I want to sit for four or five hours and listen to people who want to hear the sound of their own voice. It has no effect. It's like talking to a wave in the ocean. But it is part of it, sort of the ego need of politics.

We had several meetings, and we decided we were just never going to make any progress because people wanted to get involved in parliamentary maneuvering and fights of no substance. We could spend twenty-five minutes deciding when are we going to have the next meeting.

The McGovern Commission##

Dutton: All of that is aggravated by California's historic lack of party discipline. Or put another way, chronic factionalism.

To jump a moment, I was one of the key people on the so called McGovern Commission, for reform of Democratic convention rules. My earlier California experience led me to oppose proportional representation as just another step toward greater factionalism and greater difficulty in party operations getting together to offer the electorate coherent, cohesive alternatives.

Fry: You're talking about representation proportionate to ethnic groups?

Dutton: No, I was thinking of proportional representation in that delegations shall be made up of representation in relation to the vote for candidate A, B, C, and D, in an election. I thought that, in one big step, was an awful lot to bite off and was more anarchic than is desirable. I was reflecting my California experience. I'd seen so many messy situations going nowhere, too much factionalism. You don't want a monolithic operation. There's no creativity or vigor in that. But you aren't going to have political effect if you don't have some coherence, really.

On the other aspect of the McGovern Commission, no, no, I believe very strongly that blacks, women, and young people need to be represented in some approximate relationship to their share of the

Dutton: population, without a quota system. In fact I made the motion on women and young people in the big fight we had nationally and have since somewhat pulled back from that as a party thing. I still believe, for example, that to say that women, as a majority of the populace, should not have representation coming close to fifty percent--I'm not saying 51.8 percent, like their share of the population; I'm not even saying forty-five percent; but I'm saying that at least over forty percent of the delegates should be women--I don't think that's a quota or anything else like that. I just don't believe the political process is going to bring women up into participation, or blacks or anyone else like that unless they get a fair voice. How to enlarge participation without a quota is something I think we've all messed up on.

Fry: These problems that you're talking about now that came so much to the fore in the late sixties, was anyone thinking about them back in '56?

Dutton: No, or maybe only--

Fry: Maybe blacks?

Dutton: Yes, blacks were the only ones.

Women in Politics

Dutton: I never heard anybody really talking about women as a separate political element. At that stage, politicians like Pat and myself, we were reaching out for fuller campaign participation of women. We unconsciously realized their symbolic political importance. Also, they were the workers and some were the key leaders and activists. But we were doing it in unconscious ways, I think. The historical left or liberal process is to keep broadening the political base. But the extent to which we came consciously to it in the late sixties--no, not at all then.

Fry: I couldn't quite tell, because after all, you did have Elizabeth Snyder as the first woman state chairman at the time and then Libby Gatov.

Dutton: Yes, but these two got there from hard work. There are women all through history who bubble up--

Fry: But not because they're female.

Dutton: Not because they're female, no. I don't know whether you knew Liz Snyder. A woman with a heart of gold, but she was as cool and sometimes tough politically as ever walked down the street. She had marshalled her human resources with a great protective exterior.

Fry: What about Libby Smith Gatov?

Dutton: Libby was a very interested, intelligent woman. She was a close friend of Roger's and had free time and dedication. It was almost her and Roger's relationship that brought her in.

Fry: Once she got in, how would you evaluate her?

Dutton: Very intelligent person. Much less assertive initially than later. I don't mean that in any unkind way, just that Libby to begin with was very nice but not assertive. After she was in it for a while, she created a personality apart from Kent and Bradley, having needs for recognition of her presence, all very normal things in politics. Nice person.

This is not particular to women, but an awful lot of the women in politics, like most or an awful lot of the men in politics, want more and more to get into the camera range and need attention and having to have their ego massaged. That is the inter-action of politics and people--and of recognition, success and activism more broadly. It's a healthy group of human beings on one hand, but it's not the most sensitive. [laughter]

Fry: Someone was complaining about Richard Richards in this civil rights fight, always getting up and hogging the microphone.

Dutton: Remember, Dick Richards, like Dick Nixon, grew up in high school debating groups. Almost everything was put into a debate form by both. This has always told me a great deal about Nixon, his approach to problems. It's adversary; it's to score a point; you win or you lose. The idea that you hold things together or maybe everybody moves along or it's just education, in not in this view.

Richards was much that way. I usually agreed with his substantive view, but Dick was a point-scorer. Able as hell. To me now, an example of somebody who burned himself out politically running for the U.S. Senate. He wasn't broadening his base enough as he went along, as he realized too late.

Choosing a Vice President

Fry: We can move on to the vice-presidential nomination, which was really interesting that year because Adlai threw the whole thing open to the convention and said, "Okay, who do you want?"

Dutton: Yes, which we had no idea of in advance.

Fry: You didn't know that was going to happen?

Dutton: No; we did not know that was going to happen. We learned of it the night before it was announced to the press. It was a typical Stevenson step because it was to avoid a decision, which I'm afraid was a talent that would have gotten in his way if he had been president.

I got to know him quite well in Washington in the early sixties. Where I had admired him so much in the fifties, in the early sixties I decided he was a very intelligent man who lacked tough enough decision-making abilities. He saw complexity, not viable simplifications for the moment. In contrast to Harry Truman, Stevenson did not want the buck to stop with him. [laughs]

Fry: In this case he passed it back to the people, being those in the convention.

Dutton: Within the delegation there was a certain number (especially from northern California) who really were very taken with John Kennedy. They found him attractive and young, articulate and bright. The Catholic aspect was important. And they wanted to go with him. But it was clear that the overwhelming number of people within the delegation were for Kefauver from the very beginning. That included both the liberal and conservative groups.

Fry: You kept having roll call votes, caucuses.

Dutton: That's right.

Fry: I picked up from a Western Political Quarterly, what may or may not be all of the caucus roll calls. They said the first one was thirty-three for Kefauver, ten and a half for Kennedy, and twenty-three and a half for Hubert Humphrey. Then you had a second one sometime, which was thirty-seven and a half for Kefauver, twenty-five for Kennedy, and then Hubert Humphrey was down to five. At the conclusion of that one there were a lot of votes switched and it came out Kefauver fifty, Kennedy eighteen, which is roughly three to one for Kefauver.

Dutton: The decision was clear where it was going to go. A lot of delegates wanted to be on the winning bandwagon. Also, some thought it was better to make it look like an impressive win. Humphrey's group was made up of liberals who especially could not take Kennedy--i.e., the Catholic aspect--and moved when he ran third.

Also, Kennedy was trying to get name mention. He didn't want the nomination. I think if he saw it was going to him, he would have pulled back very rapidly. Kennedy never thought that Stevenson had any chance in '56. Kennedy wanted to become a national figure, but

Dutton: he did not want to get on a losing ticket. There's historical evidence on both sides of that. In any event, there were ambiguities in his behavior at Chicago. He was wanting high profile and leaving room open to get out.

Situations like that in a convention reflect themselves in delegations very rapidly. A lot of fairly sophisticated politicians --congressmen, Democrats--reading it, "Kennedy doesn't really want it. This is just a charade." So they're flip-flopping and moving around on the thing.

Fry: Kennedy and a lot of the other candidates for vice president came and spoke before the California delegation. Were you in on that 3:00 am meeting in Ellie Heller's suite, with Kennedy and I think Salinger and Larry O'Donnell?

Dutton: No.

Fry: It was just a very small number of people. It must have been just this Kennedy crowd.

Dutton: Ellie was very much for Kennedy, very early. She thought he--it was important for Ellie that the Kennedys had class. And Kefauver obviously didn't have class. [laughs]

Fry: Kefauver's not a Heller type person.

Dutton: No. Ellie was a good soldier for Pat, but he never turned her on. She loved Stevenson, loved Roosevelt, and the high point in her political life was Truman. But I must say the Kefauvers and the Pat Browns didn't mobilize her like other candidates could.

Fry: I thought here was some agreement for switching a ballot, after a couple of ballots, to Kennedy from Hubert Humphrey if the balloting went on that way.

Dutton: I think you have to take that with a grain of salt. Yes, I'm sure there were people like Larry O'Brien and Kenny O'Donnell who were working on that. Those exercises are always going on. Sometimes they're successful and they go down in history. More often than not they're pipe dreams. I always take with considerable skepticism the idea that if it just goes on a little longer, it will come around to somebody else. Because some politicians play several sides at once, not everybody, but too many.

Relations with John F. Kennedy

Dutton: I would say I was somewhat attracted by Kennedy. Afterward I ended up in his White House staff as one of eight assistants.

Fry: I wondered if this was where you first--

Dutton: No, no. I was against Kennedy right up until [laughs] late spring of '60. I was attracted by Stevenson. I liked him. I found Kennedy, in the perspective of the fifties, opportunistic--great similarities between him and Nixon. Sounds terrible now, but I wouldn't be honest if I did not say it. The ambitious young man, too much in a hurry. The rich father. Where does he really stand on issues? Writing Profiles in Courage to implicitly indicate he's got courage. Except on Algeria really not taking very many tough decisions. Coming out to California and speaking as late as February '60; terrible speaker.

He matured and developed so much in 1960. All the Kennedy men tend to be late political bloomers and maturers. Bob was very much that way. The extent of Bob's personal growth between age thirty-five and thirty-eight was incredible. Jack Kennedy was going through the same thing.

But no, I was not for him then and have no apologies for it. You see, I was the only person who was not working in his primary campaign and who had been against him that they finally took as a presidential assistant in the White House. I had some problems because of it. I was suspected by a few people, not by the Irish mafia. I was more suspect to the supposed issue people. The politicians with whom I got along well totally took me in. I ended up as one of Kenny O'Donnell's closest friends before he died. I always used to accuse Pat--Pat and I used to sort of needle each other. "Pat, you're for him primarily because he's Catholic." [laughter]

Anti-Catholic Sentiment in the California Delegation

Fry: Pat told me he really was for Kennedy as vice president, but he decided he really didn't want to see him get the nomination because he would go down to defeat.

Dutton: I think that's somewhat true. Pat was torn between finding Kennedy attractive and able and Catholic--and I think that was important to Pat; it was to a great many people in the country--and at the same time seeing that a clear majority of the California delegation wasn't going to go for J.F.K.

Not very far below the surface--particularly with a number of the delegates from southern California in '56--was that they didn't want a Catholic. One of the fascinating things to me is the extent to which the Jewish culture wants tolerance to protect them in the

Dutton: larger Christian society, yet many saw the emergence of a Catholic as threatening. Tolerance and acceptance must be a two-way street.

In any event, there was a lot of anti-Catholic prejudice in the bickering small talk. Everybody was very careful to keep it out of press comments, but you only had to move around that '56 delegation, and that's not very long ago, to hear a bunch of anti-Catholic cracks that were pretty tough. They came from some of the most liberal people on the delegation.

Fry: And probably people who supported Pat Brown.

Dutton: Yes, but Pat was never tagged with his Catholicism as much as Kennedy. Also, you could support a Catholic governor easier at that time than you could support a Catholic for president. The pope seemingly was getting too close to the throne when you talked about it for the presidency.

Fry: The story of what happened on the floor in the California delegation for that vote is one of the more dramatic ones of the politics of the fifties. I'm dying to hear your version. [laughs]

Dutton: I don't recall the details too much. My main recollection is that it was a comedy of errors and confusion. People like Chet Holifield threatened to stalk off. Sam Yorty, being totally non-cooperative, had a separate little operation of his own. Ed Pauley and a few others off in the wings--I can't remember the others right now--were saying, "The only thing that's important in this is protecting the Congress," which is where they had their influence, and "Stevenson is going to go down," and "My God, what are getting a Catholic into this picture for?" The northern and southern Californians as separate as the liberals and conservatives. And the congressmen and old-timers separate from the club people. The drama of the thing in my opinion came from the emotionalism of a number of the southern California Democrats. They could make any issue into an end-of-the-world kind of thing.

Factionalism: Hallmark of California Politics

Dutton: To focus on Pat Brown for a second, Pat is interesting in such situations because he just wants to go away. He got exasperated in that convention. It was one of the few times I've seen Pat exasperated, in my opinion, over the substance of the situation. He was exasperated over, "How can you have this excess of emotion in public over something that is not this earthshaking or could adversely affect public perceptions of us Democrats?" Pat is generally warm and engaging, and he laughs at himself and never blows his stack. But that is one of the few times I've seen Pat exasperated in public.

Fry: Here you have this huge delegation there on the floor and nobody could figure out what the vote was.

Dutton: Yes. I saw the same thing in the '60 convention.

Fry: Yes, it got worse. [laughter] It didn't get better.

Dutton: And I saw the same thing in '68 in Chicago. There are a lot of explanations, but the two main ones are: too big a delegation to handle; if they don't caucus on the side, you can't do it adequately on the convention floor. More important than that is just that the independence, the contrariness, the factionalism of California Democratic politics. That must never be underestimated.

Fry: Did you need a stonger dictator to get the vote?

Dutton: No. A dictator would have broken it like glass. You'd have people walking out. You'd have people standing up telling off the dictator. You'd have far more of a negative media story.

This goes to the essence of California politics, or present-day politics. What does anybody in California politics have to give anybody else to get them to compromise their ego or conscience? There are no jobs. There's no tradition of discipline. California isn't going to produce a dictator. The only lousy little one we'll produce is like a Nixon, who thinks he's going to do it by manipulation and back-roomness. But the idea of a man or woman standing up and by force of personality or threats or hitting somebody--which I can see in Illinois and Pennsylvania politics, or maybe Massachusetts --is hard to conjure up. California is too independent. It's not just Democrats. It is our California society. It is not a society which is going to be put together in clear, dominated ways.

Fry: The true vote I guess was never known. Pat says he doesn't really know, but sort of grabbed a figure out of the air. Do you know?

Dutton: I certainly don't know. I have no idea. As the secretary of the delegation, I was in charge of running the operation and counting the votes at the end. There were a couple of people, Unruh and-- I forget--one or two of the others who were counters. We were broken down into congressional-district groups. You'd have a guy like Chet Holifield, a very strong-willed man, twenty years in Congress, and Clair Engle, each in charge of one of the groups, and key men like Despol and other union leaders in charge of another, some very strong-willed and capable people. But the chaos on the floor, the contrariness of the individual delegates was--

Pat should not take a bum rap on this, as far as I'm concerned. It was a milieu in which no one was going to assert much coherence or clarity. [laughs] You know this is terribly important in my

Dutton: opinion, in a broader sense. When the boat gets rocking too much, don't try to get too much control of it. A rigid tree snaps first in the wind. If your car slides on snow, go with it. Too much will is a disaster for a pluralistic, activist country or social or political situation. You'd better make sure that when you try to do something, you're going to get a response; because otherwise, not only are you going to look ineffective and ridiculous, you're just another contributing factor to the disorganization that's going on.

Dick Tuck's Bogus Tickets

Fry: To add to the scene, there was Dick Tuck. Everyone tells me that he forged some passes to the convention, but I never did know why. Was this just a funny joke?

Dutton: Oh, no. Later on Tuck used to do it to be funny and get publicity and be perverse. But '56 was the first time he ever did it. I can remember he was sitting around in a hotel room with a couple of beds, with about six or seven women of the delegation. What happened was, as in any convention, there were not enough tickets allocated to California. There's only so many seats and you spread them around. Well, California was greedy. They wanted more passes. We had those half-delegate votes. We just needed more passes than we could get.

So Tuck, who's a very creative second-story man, said, "I'll just make some." So, he got cardboard comparable to what the tickets were made out of, cut them the right size. The 1956 ticket (I remember this very well) had the skyline of Chicago on it. If the ticket was red, which it probably was, Tuck and some of the girls got red hardback paper. Then with pencil and some ink (they drew with pencil because I remember the skyline was in some kind of grey etching) they did a rough approximation. They didn't really try to closely copy it. They just faked it, with jagged lines. Then with ink they put in some of the other stuff. Then Tuck went to, I think, a local printer and got the print part put on correctly.

The irony of it was that Tuck became a folk hero in the situation. Even Jim Finnegan, who was in charge of the overall convention, came to Tuck to get some. [laughter] The security arrangements for national conventions ever since have been trying to anticipate a similar effort.

Fry: The next scenario is the Democratic State Central Committee on September 2, where again you had some platform fights over things like civil rights, a detailed water plan, and FEPC [Fair Employment Practices Commission]. It looks like from the press that the hottest one was the fight over whether or not the state was going to open up its architectural contracts to private architects. Everyone got pretty hot under the collar about that. Labor--

Dutton: Yes, that got a lot of attention. Labor was interested. But I don't think that concerned more than three percent of the public. There was probably some flacking by either labor or architectural firms, particularly to reporters. I don't recall that one very well. I do remember the meeting.

Here again, I partly don't recall it; to this day I don't understand why just passing resolutions is all that important when it is known they will be ignored. That is not the Congress or state legislature.

There are people in party politics who think passing resolutions has some significance - or, more accurately, feeds their ego. It's a bit of a propaganda effort. It may advance the ball a little bit for them, but I find those to be dumb exercises. They are not at all restrictive or influential with elected Democrats. So Pat's course seemed to be: don't get involved, be gone that day; or if you're there, be bland. I'm a brawler in a lot of adversary situations, but I just don't find that as a key time to fight.

Fry: The water plan, civil rights, and the FEPC all kind of smacked as forerunners of '58. I thought maybe you and Pat were sending up some trial balloons.

Dutton: No, absolutely not, quite the contrary. Those issues were all very much a part of the whole period, the decade. No, the opposite.

Fry: [laughter] You hadn't blown them up in the first place.

Dutton: No. This relates to Pat's style. Pat would not like this, but he is less an innovator than an implementer who will take issues that are already moving along, as FEPC and the water plan. He deserves great credit for what he did. He can go back and show in clippings that he had been on those issues all through the fifties and back into the forties and things like that. But the truth of the matter is that Pat was essentially picking up ideas already in the political environment. I think most effective politicians are that way.

Dollars for Democrats

Fry: What did you think of Dollars for Democrats, which I think was Nancy Swadesh? Did you think it was a good idea?

Dutton: Yes, it was a good idea. Paul Butler, the national chairman, raised that. The principal benefit of it to me was not the raising of the money, but getting workers out, taking these volunteers that you get for such a brief period of time and getting them all working out in

Dutton: the neighborhoods. In a sense, it was also symbolic politics to a great extent. It's appearing to have a grassroots operation, a huge number of people with whom you're saturating an area, a community, when the truth of the matter is it's pretty limited and superficial. In a symbolic sense it's important, but that just suggests how much I'm a media politician. The amount of money that was raised was considerable in dollar figures. But when you divide it among local candidates, congressional, Senate, presidential, state, and county committee, it doesn't come to a great deal.

You also have a loosely-controlled fund system, and there was considerable leakage. Doesn't bother me; but it's a bit corroding and corrupting at a petty level. I was always for Dollars for Democrats, but I never got ecstatic about it.

Fry: Were there any examples, that you knew of, where the money actually went to a different or opposing candidate or someone in a different faction than it was raised for?

Dutton: That's not uncommon at all. My classic example was Ed Pauley moving it away from Stevenson, as I told you.

I used to laugh about that with Mansfield years later. We were both such suckers. [laughs]. We heard the money pitch. We saw the checks being written. We say Pauley collect it. We just assumed he would forward most of it to the Stevenson campaign. It was a lot of money. As I recall, it was over \$50,000. There was the head of Starkist Tuna and a bunch of oil people, some very big businessmen from southern California. They were all giving \$2,500, \$5,000. There were one or two \$10,000 checks.

In the meantime, our campaign was hurting. We didn't have the money to pay printing bills, couldn't take enough ads. To see something like fifty-odd thousand dollars just float away--

Generally in Dollars for Democrats, as I said, there was some skimming off the top. Let's say the doorbell ringers gather it in. They take it to a local headquarters. The local headquarters then takes it to a county central committee or it goes then to southern California. There was not a personal taking of it but rather diversion for local or special use before all of it got to the central totalling-up.

Comments on Pat Brown, Clair Engle, and George Miller, Jr.##

Dutton: A conversation with Pat now is just like a conversation with him in the mid-fifties, diffuse and warm and funny and self-deprecating.

Fry: And doing a million things all at once.

Dutton: Yes. Sometimes I think Pat's doing more things now than he was in those days. He was moving around much more then. There was more physical demand on him, much more. Pat was a tremendously energetic person. He had such stamina. But he was career-oriented. He was job-oriented. Pat was not deep into all kinds of side interests and activities, intellectual, sports, anything else like that. Pat always kept his eye on the main ball. He was a very purposeful, direct and focused man. Behind his appearance of sort of disorganization or charming looseness, he was a very directed person. He didn't necessarily know where he was going, but he knew he was going somewhere.

Fry: In his day-to-day activities?

Dutton: Yes, that is correct, which goes to all the things we've been talking about. Whether it's resolutions in a state central committee meeting or votes at a convention, Pat didn't let the diversion of the moment get in the way of this mainstream career purposefulness.

Fry: You or somebody had put in Clair Engle as state chairman of the campaign after the convention in 1956.

Dutton: Pat did that. That was the result of lots of things. Clair wanted to run for Senator in 1958, which he did. He wanted to get to a statewide position of prominence. He had no real exposure in southern California, having been a long-time upstate congressman. This was a way for him to travel around, make speeches. Clair was well-organized, hardworking, disciplined, and he was sympatico to Pat in a philosophical sense, middle of the road, neither very conservative nor very liberal. He was interested in functional politics. He did not have a big ego. He and Pat hit it off very well.

Fry: Was this because you wanted him to run for something?

Dutton: No, Clair wanted to run. Clair wanted to make his move from the congressional seat to the Senate and realized he had to have a build-up, and this was a part of that. He was very frank about it. We knew what he was doing, and we had no problems about the thing. Among all the neurotic personalities, Clair was one of the healthy ones. There were no tantrums, ego massage, and so forth like that. He was a nice person, ambitious. Most of these other people we've touched on here were perfectly nice, but God, they had ego demands.

Fry: What about George Miller, Jr., who was deceased long before our project started?

Dutton: Lovely guy, in my opinion. I think I've said this before, but if George in the late forties and early fifties had been able to move out of the political trap he was in, he could have been one of the

Dutton: great men of this country, in my opinion. By this stage, by '56, George was one of the two or three most able people in Democratic politics. A guy like Don Bradley consulted with him often. You should talk with Don because Don knew him much better than I did. I knew George pretty well in Sacramento towards the end of the decade.

By '56 he had been involved in the state legislature too long, a little bit too involved in just legislative politics. He had run statewide, if you remember, for lieutenant governor in 1950 on the ticket with Jimmy Roosevelt and got humiliated because Jimmy got overwhelmed. George was somewhat bitter about southern California. Bitter, cynical, he'd been a legislator too long.

Fry: Miller did organize CDC, didn't he?

Dutton: He was one of the key founders, yes. In the late forties, remember, that was when he was trying to move statewide. It was really before he'd been overwhelmed. Cranston came back from World War II. He was doing things in the period '47 to '49, which George Miller, Jr. was too. The club movement came slightly later, but the club movement was really built on the Asilomar conference which they put together.

Fry: Stevenson?

Dutton: Well, he was an immediate catalyst a little later. The problem was that George had hopes; he organized; but then he just moved back into the state legislature again.

Fry: Miller's name surfaced as I was going through the papers, and that surprised me.

Dutton: We all talked about George a lot. We all thought, "Well, if ever we have an insoluble problem, George will be able to solve it." But George was a very practical man. He didn't think Stevenson was going to win, so why make the effort, which is real pol. Why did Pat make the effort? Very similar to George in many ways. But Pat was a statewide politician already, rather than a legislative politician. His energies were in that larger political arena; whereas George's were in the legislature. And George had been thwarted statewide by the mid-fifties while Pat was just getting ready for a top race. Pat was also a better long-distance runner.

Fry: I guess if you already have a statewide position, especially if it's the only one in your party as Pat had, you have to stay in.

Dutton: Yes. But keep in perspective that Pat did not try to provide party leadership in the early and mid-fifties. He was wary of that. He was building his own personal role, making contacts and surfacing on presidential politics.

Fry: I didn't find much in Pat Brown's papers about the actual final election campaign.

Dutton: No, Pat was not that involved the last two months.

Press Coverage and Campaign Issues

Fry: I wanted to ask you about some of the techniques of the campaign. You must have had a problem with newspaper coverage still. This was when a lot of the newspapers were still Republican.

Dutton: That's correct. We had terrible problems. I did a study during the latter weeks of the campaign that I took down to the L.A. Times afterward. I was a good friend of Dick Bergholz, who was on the Times then, and Carl Greenburg, who was political editor of the L.A. Examiner at that stage. He went to the Times later. Anyway, I kept the clippings of the two papers, particularly the Times, for about three or four weeks. I measured all the inches. I did this out of frustration and anger, but it turned into a very useful thing, a beginning of my real education on the media. I measured all the inches, what pages they were on, pictures, things like that, and made an analysis of them.

I decided I wasn't going to have any effect if I took it down before the election was over. It would just look like I'm begging for a little bit of space. So I waited till mid-November of '56 and went down afterwards and gave it to them. I said, "Look, now. I can't get anything for the campaign. You will just have to judge for yourself if this isn't the most outrageous thing in the world."

For example, Stevenson, a national presidential candidate, would fly into L.A. for two days to give speeches and we'd have 25,000 people for him at the Burbank airport, mainly from Lockheed--and the union turned them out--but we would get on only page nine of the L.A. Times. Eisenhower the same day, sitting back doing nothing, a non-news event, and they'd put him on page one to try to swamp Stevenson in southern California. Gross manipulation of the stuff again and again.

I developed quite a good relationship with a number of key political reporters on the basis of this memo which got talked about and passed around. You don't have a great deal of effect with things like that, but they saw that I was a serious person and I was not just grousing about the coverage, that I really had worked on it, and was trying to get a longer view of their work considered. It was a worthwhile exercise, although I'd done it originally to sort of vent my own frustrations.

Fry: Did you and Hale Champion get together over this problem at this early date?

Dutton: No. Hale was never in any of this.

Fry: He was on the Chronicle, I should add.

Dutton: He was on the Chronicle doing some stories, doing some political coverage, but not covering the campaign very much. Hale never got in with Pat--I don't think Pat ever met Hale, and I don't think I met Hale--until after the 1958 gubernatorial election when he had an article in The Reporter magazine that we liked.

He was picked as press secretary then because Pat liked that and, in candor, we were trying to move out the press secretary we had had in the campaign who had some personal problems but has lately become an important national political activist. We were looking for someone to fill a vacuum, and this article popped up. It was a good analysis of the '58 election, so Pat invited him aboard.

Fry: Who was the person who had the frustrating job of handling your press relations in '56? Did Bradley do any of that?

Dutton: No, Don was in San Francisco. Don came to L.A. to help get our effort started. Then, after I sort of got on top of it, only a few times after that. Don liked it up in northern California, lived there, worked there, didn't like to go to southern California. I was somewhat the person, the Don Bradley of the south, without his experience at that stage.

Fry: Was the press man James Keene?

Dutton: Yes, it was James Keene. I was trying to think of his name. He was actually a local public relations guy. He'd been student-body president at Berkeley many years before, opened a PR operation in southern California, and handled our advertising, pamphlets, press contacts, everything like that.

Fry: I wondered what else he did.

Dutton: I'm sure he's in L.A. still.

Fry: As you viewed this, could you see any vulnerabilities of the Eisenhower-Nixon team that you thought you might exploit in the campaign?

Dutton: Well, that's complicated. Yes, in a wide range of issues, labor unions for the labor rank and file, FEPC with the blacks. First of all, you have got to take the individual issues with the individual voting groups. How do you move them? Nixon-Eisenhower were vulnerable on many of those things. The fact that they won so overwhelmingly, as

Dutton: Earl Warren, as Pat Brown, tell me that the effectiveness of individual group appeals is decreasing all the time. We all go more and more for common denominator perceptions. We are a more and more homogenized society. We did all the individual issues, looking for specific interest groups: farm issues for the Central Valley, water for San Diego, Riverside and San Bernardino. We did all those.

We talked to the nuclear issue, for example. Stevenson flew to L.A. and gave a speech before the national convention of the American Legion that to me was a great speech, had tremendous subsequent effect on American policy but absolutely laid an egg in the campaign.

Fry: That's what I understand.

Dutton: Just, awful, yes. One, he was confronting a hostile audience, as Kennedy did in 1960 in Houston over religion. Everybody thinks that the confrontational approach was invented in Houston. Well, it's been done for many decades. Stevenson tried to confront the American Legion at its national convention on the nuclear issue.

Fry: Saying that we should unilaterally disarm?

Dutton: It was not even that extreme. If you look at the speech, it was a very tentative movement towards arms control, partial disarmament, verification, etc. By where we are today it was a mousy speech, but it was a great breakthrough then, in terms of being willing to say that the future is not all nuclear, that the more nuclear weapons we have does not mean the safer and better the world is. It was turning a corner in terms of public thinking. But anyway, it laid an egg. It was premature politically. It was like planting seeds at a time when harvesting was needed.

Then an interesting final issue, just to talk about a campaign technique, you recall the Suez crisis came along. The British, French and Israel tried to take Suez at that stage, and Eisenhower backed them down. I admire him for that. In fact, I'm more and more convinced that Democrats like myself misread many things in the fifties.

In any event, Suez broke. We immediately, as the left of the Democrats, went for both the Jewish and the peace vote. We had already standard political billboards all over Los Angeles, Stevenson, Kefauver, just the traditional ones, trying to get life into the campaign. Realizing we were drowning, I decided when the Suez crisis broke to go for a long-shot chance. Bradley didn't agree up north. You used billboards more then than now because TV was less dominant than it is now. So our budgeting was more towards billboards than one would do at this stage. Stevenson's and Kefauver's pictures were up, flags, and all that. After the Suez crisis broke, I had a great big strip of paper [gestures] this wide, about that long put diagonally across the full billboard--

Fry: About two feet by seven?

Dutton: Yes. It was an attempt to exploit the Suez crisis for peace: Eisenhower was implicitly risking getting us into war. TV spots, billboards, anything in a campaign in today's culture, where we're so newspaper-oriented, where we go with the pace of events can shake up the electorate well-used. Unfortunately, there is a rigidity in most political communications. Everybody gets their literature ready ninety days in advance and sticks with it. It would be much better to hold back, have quick printing, rely on less slick, glossy stuff and be more timely and topical.

Fry: Leave spaces to put in new issues.

Dutton: New issues, and things like that.

Fry: Did Nixon show up a lot in this campaign in California since this was his home state?

Dutton: I don't recall that. He was supposed to have his supporters and allies there. He was trying to get himself ready to run for president in 1960, the end of Eisenhower's second term. He was therefore trying to get political IOU's from people around the country, meaning --my guess is--that he was working in other areas that he thought he would need in 1960.

Fry: There was a Republican truth squad, as usual, and you probably had a Democratic truth squad.

Dutton: We did. I always believed in a truth squad. It didn't usually do much good but has harrassing use. [laughter] I believe in tending to the public, and the fun and games side of party politics is dumb. At the same time, in a campaign you have to harrass the other side so it has no time to give to its own priorities. A bit of psychological warfare has its usefulness if not too time-consuming.

Fry: I forgot to ask you too about debates as a technique. That would have been in the primary, I guess, between Adlai and Kefauver.

Dutton: That would have been in the primary. Remember there was a whole series of primaries, like one week before the California primary in '56, there was a primary in Florida which was a very major one. One of the problems was for Stevenson to appeal to Florida's greater conservatism one week and the liberalism of a Democratic primary in California in that period the next week. Also, Stevenson had to win almost all challenges, as the front-runner, while Kefauver could be more selective.

Fry: In a debate, where the opponent is trying to pick out things you have said and confront you with them, you were afraid this might sharpen some of the issues?

Dutton: Yes, that's right. Sometimes that's desirable for a society--and in politics. But not always or absolutely. Balance is a better guide.

Fry: There was a quote that I wanted to ask you about. Totton Anderson--this is again the Western Political Quarterly--wrapped it up and said it was a "colossal blunder" for Adlai to tangle with a war hero and come out soft on the hydrogen bomb question and anti-draft and on national defense. Were you feeling uncomfortable about Adlai's positions on that in California?

Dutton: No, not at all. I guess one part of it was because I believed in his position. We are still deeply trapped in up and down cycles on this. Two, I thought there had to be some change in that period in the drift of the country. Of course, it's more complicated than that. Third, we were building on a liberal base. The point of politics is to get 51 percent, and we had to build up off a liberal base. You usually can't out-compete your other side on his strengths. Certainly, Ike could not be out-militaried. Eisenhower was a war hero.

But I don't think that overall aspect was Stevenson's only main problem. Stevenson's problem was springing new ideas without proper preparation and not articulating them both in down-to-earth terms and with enough dramaticness. I think he could have done what he did and moved the substantive discussion along in key words, motivating phrasing, things like that. Politics is not just ideas, but then motivating, implementing dimensions. If one can make substantive headway, I'm perfectly willing to sloganeer a little bit to get there. But to say that you had to be a hardliner, a military person, or duck the nuclear problem because Eisenhower was a general--no, I don't think that's either politically necessary or substantively desirable.

I guess I would say (and this goes to the essence of everything we're talking about) you take a big society like California or America--the number of people, the many interests, the diverse thinking and ideas--in these presidential or gubernatorial campaigns and you're walking on eggs through a whole bunch of pitfalls. You're trying to weave together so many different things. How much are these judgments subjective! It's very much like writing poetry; poetry and politics are closer than commonly recognized. You're just looking for a few piercing insights. You're trying to illuminate the whole human condition with just a little thing here and a little thing there.

People who are very interested in issue politics, or programmatic politics, do not often enough realize, in my opinion, that the mass of society can't absorb too much of that and doesn't want to be bothered by it. Leaders are supposed to take those burdens off of most people's shoulders once a direction, a vague mandate, is settled on.

Effect of the Campaign on Pat Brown's Career

- Fry: Concerning the end of the '56 campaign, Herbert L. Phillips of the Sacramento Bee, wrote that Eisenhower really whopped them and that California Democrats lay in sort of an elegant wreckage all over the state, but "Brown, to all intents and purposes, owned the wreckage."*
- Dutton: That's partly true. Partly we were better off in '56 than we had been. In '52 and '56 we were developing a cadre of activists in the club movement, people like myself and, in a larger frame, political management and direction. We were groping for new issues and insights a little beyond FDR and Truman. Sam Lubell's The Future of American Politics was superb on this in the '50s.

I look at '52 and '54 as the bottom of the wave in California politics. I think '56 was a building campaign. In terms of this interview, Pat got himself seen as not just attorney general but identified again more with presidential politics and larger issues. He moved out of the narrow constituency of the attorney general to deal with the broader one of society-wide problems, which is also gubernatorial politics to a great extent. There were, one, a cadre of activists and, two, this new identification of Pat. That was a very important rebuilding. The '56 election results were a wreckage, but it was a hell of a lot better wreckage than we had going into '56.

Where Pat deserves credit on this is not merely going in there and doing it, but here again Pat's restraint. Pat could have gotten so bloodied as the liberal for Adlai Stevenson. Paul Ziffren in my opinion was an I-want-to-die-for-Stevenson supporter. Pat Brown was going to survive, be enhanced and fight again--considerably stronger. Pat didn't get into the details of Stevenson's race. He didn't go all out. He had a very subtle handle on it, not too firm a handle. He was reading the situation well--the electorate, with great sophistication, which is what it's all about.

- Fry: Well, next time we'll have to go upward and onward to '58, the glorious one.
- Dutton: That campaign was also very much an exercise in balance--both thrust and restraint. Phil Burton and others wanted us to go all out on issues like FEPC. We wanted the blacks, and we decided that Pat would get more votes out of the black community by going in and showing he

*Herbert L. Phillips, Big Wayward Girl (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1968), p. 175.

Dutton: was a good human being that they could trust, rather than being specific and ideological. We were minimally ideological and provided a maximum of direct human contact. The pay-off came with enactment of an FEPC act in '59. Campaigns should be prologues to power and action, not ideological excesses.

Fifty-eight in my opinion is primarily interesting as a highly disciplined campaign. The Republicans were bleeding themselves to death in the Knight-Knowland fight. What we were doing was trying to take advantage of an historic brawl, and we did it very well, to the frustration of a lot of active Democrats.

Fry: That victory set up the Democrats for years to come.

Dutton: Yes it did. Eight years of Pat, and later Jerry coming along. And two decades of Democratic legislative dominance. The far more difficult part of that exercise was restraint, not assertiveness.

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III THE CALIFORNIA GUBERNATORIAL CAMPAIGN, 1958

[Interview 4: October 19, 1978]##

The Political Backdrop: Decades of Nonpartisanship

Fry: Just to set the stage, Totten Anderson writes about 1958:

For the first time since 1889, the Democrats effectively bid and made the grand slam of state politics, winning six out of seven statewide elective offices, including the governorship, control over the state senate and assembly, a majority of the congressional delegation, a United States Senatorship, and even the entire five-man State Board of Equalization as a bonus.*

So how did you do it?

Dutton: There were a number of factors that went into 1958. First, in terms of Pat Brown, he had been running statewide since before '50, and he had been the DA of San Francisco since 1942. In addition, when Truman suddenly withdrew from the Democratic presidential nomination early in '52, Pat was pushed prematurely forward to be the stand-in. That also gave him great statewide recognition. He was one of the first statewide politicians, other than Earl Warren, to see that anyone from the San Francisco Bay Area had to do endless preparatory work in southern California. Pat Brown used to spend several days a week campaigning down there beginning at the outset of the '50s. He was very good at getting in the papers, primarily the Hearst papers at that stage because the L.A. Times would block him out. My point

*Western Political Quarterly, vol XII, 1959.

Dutton: is that by 1958 he was well-established as a statewide figure, well-established as a law-enforcement figure, moderate, full of warmth and personality, not too controversial.

In the 1954 gubernatorial campaign, for example, Pat had gotten the L.A. Times endorsement for re-election as attorney general, almost in return for not getting too deeply involved in the Democratic gubernatorial campaign of Dick Graves. I don't know if Pat would say that, but it's still true. [laughs]

So first you have the statewide recognition and acceptance. Then by mid-1957, there was the profound Republican split due to the Senate minority leader, Bill Knowland, deciding to challenge the incumbent governor of his own party, Goodie Knight. There were two major factors going into a major campaign: an established figure who did not have to get known by the public and the other side in deep disarray.

A third consideration, which is a negative in the picture, is that the Democrats in California had elected only one governor in this century: Culbert Olson, and for one term, 1938-42. With all due respect to him he was a disaster as governor. His administration fell apart; there was some middling corruption, and he overshifted liberal as the state and the country moved right to get ready for World War II. Republican primacy in the state in the first half of the century is indicated by not only the election of just that one Democratic governor but, more clearly, the national Democratic landslide, which came with the Great Depression, being felt late ('38) and for only one gubernatorial term. In short, Californians, rank and file, just didn't have a terribly good taste about the Democratic party.

Looking at the party itself, you had the CDC coming up in the 1950s, or out of the late 1940s with Alan Cranston pushing it, a good grassroots organization, the first one the state ever had. They were what one would call ideological liberal, which was my coloration--but the state wasn't that.

The state had six or seven decades of Republican rule under the guise of almost nonpartisanship. Hiram Johnson assured that with the 1911 reforms. Democratic activists, rank and file, didn't realize how much liberal partisanship turned off the average voter in the state.

So part of the problem in '58 was to take advantage of Pat's personal assets, the disarray of the Republicans, and to keep the Democrats from splintering or going too liberal (as happened in 1934). Neither Pat nor I, as the person who was running the campaign, believed in all-out nonpartisanship philosophically. But it was a political tactic, and it was, in my opinion, a quite legitimate one.

Dutton: Apart from our thinking so, the Democratic activists, rank and file, the CDC, were suspicious of Pat. Especially in southern California many were wary of Pat's Roman Catholic background. He was also more conservative than the Democrats of the activist type, as distinguished from what the general voting group really liked.

All of that meant that we needed to minimize our possible intra-party problems and maximize the opposition conflict and general public situation. In effect, control the focus as much as possible. For that we ran a fairly bland campaign, kept pushing at the Republicans. We had an eight-point program which talked about abolishing cross filing as a major institutional reform for the state. The program also included state fair employment practices legislation, economic development, the state water plan which had been pushed by the Democrats and Republicans alike, and other matters. The eight-point program attempted to appeal to various major constituency groups and, more than that, respond to what was expected. Part of the problem was that even though Pat was long-established statewide, he was always so warmhearted and good humored that there was a question of proving that he was not just an affable handshaker or, at most, only a law-enforcement officer. He had been so perceived as that from his eight years as DA of San Francisco and eight years as attorney general that we had to prove that he was economically substantive and had a broader range of interest and ability than as the attorney general. This is the same problem that Earl Warren had at one point. It was not difficult to identify or to do something about.

In any event, the eight-point program gave substance. It was not what one would call a mean, tough campaign by Pat. The Republicans took care of cutting each other up. We went very hard in the fall of 1957, beginning at the state AFL-CIO convention, which I guess was in September of '57, through Halloween, when in effect Knowland confirmed he had decided to challenge Knight, and Knight decided he was going to stay in and not be pushed over to the Senate race.

Responding to Republican Disarray

Fry: Was that when you first heard about that?

Dutton: It came as a surprise. There had been a few advance rumors, but they seem too farfetched to be taken seriously. But by the autumn we started going with a press release several days a week, using language a little overstated, hyperbole, simplification and other steps more liked by the media than politicians, trying to keep in the papers.

Fry: Do you mean that you were doing that or you were responding to Knowland?

Dutton: We were responding to Knowland, but trying to enlarge and exacerbate the situation for the public. The history of California politics when Kyle Palmer was political editor of the L.A. Times and Earl Behrens was the comparable GOP point man in the north, as political editor of the S.F. Chronicle, suggested the Republicans would very quickly paper over the situation and arrange things through the centralizing channels of the major papers and Republican finance, the state Republican finance committee. We wanted to make sure they didn't have time to do that. At that stage, we were really trying to anticipate the past patterns of the Republican establishment in California more than we really were concerned about Goodie Knight and Bill Knowland.

So if you go back and look at the 'clips' during that period, our efforts were very effective. Harry Lerner, an S.F. public relations man especially effective with negative attacks, was brought in by Pat. Harry had known Pat for many years. Pat and I tended to want to be (or be limited to being) more positive or didn't like stridency too much. Harry considered himself as Jack the Ripper in politics. He came in and did a couple of really wild-language releases [chuckles] that we calmed down a bit. But they were still very effective in the colorful verbalisms that the press liked. We rode that approach hard until about Thanksgiving or mid-December of '57, I think the papers will show.

Here again (the counterbalance is always critical in mainstream politics) the question was trying to make sure that we didn't get characterized in the public mind as just negativists, just exploiting the Republican turmoil. So at that stage Pat began really talking about what he would do as governor, the state water plan. That was when he first eased into that mind-set comfortably. And even then he was not too at ease with the stance.

This kind of campaign--which is fairly standard--was never very appreciated by the Democratic activists. They liked ideological purity and over-reaction to the Republican feuding. The CDC met in February in Fresno. They would have liked an ideological loyalty test plus more blood on the floor than we were really interested in. In addition was the problem with those more interested (or temporarily preoccupied) in party control than winning the general electorate. For example, Roger Kent, who was state chairman, had been active in Democratic politics during the many, many years the party was out of power in the state; he was a very decent man, but in my personal opinion he was primarily interested in party politics. Paul Ziffren is another classic example. In fairness, both seemed to think that if they set the direction of the parties the rest of policy and power would flow from that. Such a view vastly overstated the relevance of the parties.

Fry: Well, Kent was the party almost! [laughs]

Dutton: Yes, that's right. But the problem that you have here is that the people who play party politics, at least in a state like California--and I happen to think this is true nationally now--are really not the greatest ones for then shifting over and running a statewide election. They are looking at the constituency of activists. The candidate who wants votes from the voters has to look at quite a different, larger, more complex audience. The requirements are different. If your party machine really controls and can produce votes, like in places such as Pennsylvania and the city of Chicago (at least in the past), these two exercises are somewhat the same. But in California they never had been, and I don't think they are today. So in any event, we had problems like that.

Glenn Anderson, who is now a congressman and a very good one, at that stage was very active in the CDC. It was logical for Pat to have a running mate from southern California. Glenn Anderson was little-known statewide, more an activist than the general electorate, and more liberal than it. But the CDC, out of its own internal dynamics, pushed Glenn for the lieutenant-governor nomination, and Pat acquiesced to avoid a party split. That illustrates the low-risk approach being taken. We wanted the Republicans to be the only ones divided and feuding.

Early Differences Between Brown and Unruh

Fry: Pat had Unruh in southern California.

Dutton: Yes, how that came--Pat had not known Jesse very well. When I had run the southern California Stevenson campaign in 1956, I had gotten to know Jesse. I talked Pat into using Jesse as our southern California campaign manager. Pat and Jesse began to have their problems at the temperamental (not substantive) level even then. While we were winning, relations were relatively good. But besides the temperamental differences, Jesse was a very ambitious guy as well as tremendously able in my opinion--his career has not come up to what his capability is. Jesse was often rather pushy, to which I think he'd agree. Pat never liked to be crowded and didn't crowd other people.

After the election, Pat helped Jesse to gain the chairmanship of the influential Assembly Ways and Means Committee. It was a reciprocal gesture for Jesse's campaign work. But Jesse both supported Pat and began to maneuver for control of policy and the political steering wheel during the very successful 1959 legislative session. They were going their separate ways in a political sense by the end of 1959.

Dutton: or early '60. There was trouble in the back room to some extent. Jesse was always wanting more appointments, more recognition, more policy say. Jesse was already at that stage a very able, tough political tactician who liked to clarify and define situations, and Pat was more an equivocator and reconciler--Jesse would say "soft." Pat could be stubborn and self-protecting, but in a quiet or indirect way. Jesse was confrontational, and Pat usually was not.

California Politics: Factions and Ego Massages

Dutton: If you look at Pat Brown's personal political career, as he moves up statewide, he developed a small coterie of friends around the state, particularly in southern California. I would say that they were very moderate to slightly conservative Democrats and heavily Roman Catholic. I'm thinking of people like Frank Mackin, who was later a superior court judge; Bill O'Connor, who was chief deputy attorney general in charge of the L.A. office; Bill Newsom and Tom Lynch in San Francisco; and people like that. They were Pat's personal group.

When Pat decided to run statewide for governor, I think he decided he needed a broader resource group. He moved me to be his technician and tactician--and later his political strategist. There was a bit of resentment from some of that old group. I quite frankly tried to get along in the role of a young greenhorn and work into their good graces, but there was usually a slight bit of unstated distance kept by them. These are the minor things that there are always in the human relationships of politics. It finally worked out fine.

Here you had Pat with his small group of friends. Then he brings in me, who happened to not have an independent statewide reputation politically. Then you later have the party activists, plus legislative types like Unruh, and party officials like Roger Kent, Paul Ziffren and so forth. It was like getting a bunch of horses at the starting gate to go all at the same time and approximately (hopefully) in the same general direction.

We did very much what Warren, Knight, and others had done. We relied on our own little group and tried to get along with everybody, but didn't really rely on them. Why? Because many of them are preoccupied with their own careers, businesses, etc., with lots of competition and inevitable self-directedness. A candidate needs a few totally, only committed to him--and submerging themselves for the duration of the campaign. This is especially a problem in California, with its political egoism and factionalism.

Fry: More than other states?

Dutton: Yes, much more than other states. If you've been involved in a number of national campaigns from Washington like I have been, you consider California as the most factional--the only thing comparable is the liberal wing of the Democratic party in Manhattan in New York.

One of the principal psychic compensations in California politics is ego. This is not so true with some of the black groups. They have specific things they need and want. Labor also has to produce for its rank and file to some extent. But an awful lot of the activists come out of the middle and upper-middle class. They have their own political neuroses beyond interest needs. A serious question is which political motivation is better spirited--or worse. Personal recognition, ego, is always a big dynamic in politics. But in California, as parties are less important, as there is no patronage, almost the only thing activists without immediate bread-and-butter goals can get is an ego massage, although they think their public motivation is largely idealistic.

Fry: I guess, too, if you don't have much patronage and you're someone like Pat Brown, you don't have the power of discipline, because you can't withdraw favors you don't have to give in the first place. Would that be true?

Dutton: That's true. When Pat got elected and we were setting up the administration in December of '58, early '59, we found out we had what we considered to be about sixty major appointments and a couple of hundred very minor ones. In getting ready for the 1958 campaign, I had decided to go east and look at state politics and state governments in New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Massachusetts--all then with Democratic governors. I found out, for example, in Pennsylvania they had at that stage between 17,000 and 18,000 gubernatorial appointments. Now, as I gather, Pennsylvania is down to about 6,000 of 7,000. But that's still a lot.

When, in California, you're talking about let's say sixty plus three hundred lesser part-time ones at most, you really do not have a disciplining or supportive network throughout the executive branch. If it makes for better government (and that is arguable), it certainly makes for poor politics! [laughter]

Fry: You take your choice!

Dutton: Yes. The essence of the Brown campaign, to get back to that, really was a very highly centralized campaign with very few people in on the decisions and determining strategy and what was going to be done. Then came the task of trying to keep another couple dozen of fairly high-driven ego types thinking that they were involved. That's somewhat what Roger Kent's letter is about.

Fry: That's November 14.

Dutton: It's sort of harsh and unkind to say so, so much later, but Roger was one of those whom we wanted and needed, but really didn't think that he was effective statewide. He was a nice, well-meaning, intelligent, thoughtful, dedicated man who could handle the active party people of the Bay Area but knew nothing about southern California and little about the Valley and always had a few ideological and friendship axes to grind.

Party Politics and Elective Politics: A Distinction

Dutton: The problem with party politics is that it keeps dividing to get one little faction forward. The problem with elective politics is to keep broadening the base and blurring differences and fuzzing personal relationships in order to be more outward-reaching. The cliché is that it's an exercise in addition rather than division. The party activist types were essentially people playing factional groups. Party politics and elective politics are just two different creatures really.

Fry: Kent had an office that also combined with the CDC group.

Dutton: That's right. Roger was trying to bring them in and have them feel they were part of the official party. That was fine, but that merely increased the identification of the partyiness.

Fry: The Democraticness.

Dutton: The Democraticness, which would set you up for attacks by Kyle Palmer and Earl Behrens, who were media masters at saying the Democrats were partisan and couldn't represent all the people. Underlying that was the impact of the press versus the relative impotence of the parties.

Another person who had problems with us at that stage was Phil Burton, then a San Francisco super-liberal activist and very good political tactician. Phil was always wanting to sharpen issues and differences at that stage. Phil was running for the assembly from San Francisco for the first time. I think he had run once before and lost. Fifty-eight was when he was elected for the first time. Phil was not only very liberal ideologically, much more so than now, but he was also much more consciously partisan.

Phil or Roger or Don Bradley or Libby Smith, a bunch of people, would have said in response to what I am saying, "Yes, but an overwhelming majority of the people in the state were Democrats. They just needed to be brought alive, or their Democraticness brought out."

My answer to that was they hadn't been brought out yet, and everybody had been trying and never succeeded. In California people

Dutton: registered Democrat, but voted Republican as to the governorship and many other races. Why? Because so many of their roots were in Iowa or the rural Midwest or the South--Oklahoma, Arkie, and others of the Bible Belt. Basically conservative Democrats or, at most, moderate without partisan collars.

The party structure was liberal Democratic activist, which is what I was and what Pat increasingly was after he was elected. But liberal Democratic activist was not the pattern that people were voting.

To the extent there was a tension within the '58 campaign or the Democratic party, it was, "Why aren't you more liberal? Why aren't you more assertive (often meaning strident)?"

I can remember one long discussion I had with Phil Burton. In fairness, he came up to me in Sacramento after he and Pat got elected and said our approach was absolutely correct. But during the campaign, he used to harrass us a bit, saying, "You're muffling what you really believe. You're not providing clarity."

Our point was that we were trying to get elected--you have to be honest about where you stand, but you don't need to beat your chest about it or get over-committed or fail to recognize the complexity of problems and pluralism of the society to be governed. We wanted to make sure Pat got elected. But our political strategy was very conscious, beyond that. I can remember discussions with Burton at that stage. We were trying to make sure that the broadest possible base, the largest possible winning outcome for Pat would bring in with him more state legislators, which it did. In 1958, in a sense, the blueprint was to keep a bit of distance from partisanship yet swamp the GOP and elect more Democrats. Politics is often a contrary exercise. That year more Democratic legislators were elected than had ever been elected before.

Fry: Could you explain all of the factions, for instance Burton? I got the feeling that they were not a part of Kent's operation.

Dutton: No, he was not. The factions, there were so many that it's like trying to describe a fluttering bunch of wild birds. Equally important, they had so many fewer people, so much less than they claimed. It was a bunch of personalities who, like the Wizard of Oz, claimed to have great powers, but if you look behind the screen, it was quite different.

To over-simplify, one was the grouping of Roger Kent, Libby Smith, and Don Bradley, with their retinue. They had been running northern California campaigns (presidential, state and some local) for a long, long time. They were able, bright, informed, decent people, but when it came to statewide matters, the results had not been impressive.

North-South Division in California

Dutton: Another group was the black community which had separate L.A., San Diego, Oakland, San Francisco, and other groupings. Northern and southern California were two different worlds. The Tehachapi Mountains were like the Himalayas.

That was true of the overall party, too. My early political history illustrates the cleavage. In 1956 in the Stevenson campaign, when I was running the campaign in southern California, one of my original advantages and assets there was that I had grown up in the San Francisco Bay Area, had gone to Berkeley, and started practicing law in the north. I was consequently thought of as a northerner. But after I got back from the Korean War, I took a job in Los Angeles. As a northerner in southern California, I was no threat to anybody in southern California, because I didn't have a base. So I was acceptable as a very junior person. The northerners thought they could look to me. All of a sudden I was one of the few people who could move back and forth between the two parts of the state--non-threatening, acceptable, minor, things like that. That gave an acceptance, effectiveness and ensuing legitimacy that few others had then.

Don Bradley, who was running northern California, knew southern California, but as a northern Californian, he didn't think he was acceptable, or he thought he would provoke hostilities by coming south of the Tehachapis very often. He tended to work with me. I was junior to him.

He sent me a young woman to work with me by the name of Meredith Burch, who later worked for me in the attorney general's office and the governor's office, the White House and the State Department. Dick Tuck was another Bradley friend who was sent down to work with me. Meredith and Dick had briefly been in campaigns in the Bay Area. They were supposed to tell me where the mimeograph machine was and the Registrar of Voters Office and things like that that I had no particular knowledge of.

All I'm trying to illustrate is how, even in a mechanical sense, the party was divided north and south. Even the state election code required that the state chairmanship rotate north and south, back and forth, every two years. It was just two different worlds.

In the '56 campaign when southern California was not able to raise enough money down from the north came Bradley and three key Bay Area fund-raisers--Ben Swig, Ed Heller, and Bill Roth--for a meeting with some of the southern California money-raisers. But these three distinguished, highly successful men were told by the southern California contributors, "You keep your nose out of the southern part of the state." I remember that Ed Heller and Swig, when they

Dutton: went back, said, "We'll never go to southern California for the Democratic party again." So north and south were very, very separate. The Bay Area nucleus, however, tended to pull together party people in the northern two-thirds of the state. They had good relationships and tended to give guidance and direction for the whole Central Valley, up to Eureka, Redding, Sacramento, down to Bakersfield and San Luis Obispo. There were subgroups, but it had a loose overlay of communication and civility.

In southern California, though, you had at least five or six groups within L.A. County. Orange County was a totally different animal. San Diego had nothing to do with the Los Angeles group. Then San Bernardino, Riverside, and other outlying counties were separate, with a small connection with L.A. So first you've got this geographical splintering. It went from political generation to political generation.

Labor was similarly splintered north-south and also as to key personalities. That was true even with, or despite the state AFL-CIO, which Neil [Cornelius J.] Haggerty was then head of. (He had the job Jack Henning has now.) They also went their own merry way from the party. Haggerty had supported Earl Warren for governor and played Republican politics even though he was a Democrat and had a Democratic following. That was a whole separate world unto itself. But Haggerty's course got results in all the years the state had Republican governors.

Fry: That didn't go into southern California?

Dutton: To some extent Neil did, because he was statewide executive secretary of the AFL-CIO. But in southern California the L.A. County Central Labor Council was large, powerful and a world unto itself. Even though it was part of the state AFL-CIO, it had great independence. Bill Bassett was the key man there. In addition, there were the old CIO independents, headed by John Despol, and a number of important independent unions--Teamsters, Retail Clerks, Operating Engineers, etc. Each claimed its own political clout--and greatly exaggerated what they could deliver or do.

This goes back to the growth of northern and southern California as two separate societies and economies, drawing on different histories and migrations. It's much more fundamental than just the surface politics and immediate personalities.

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Dutton: On the question of whether Neil Haggerty or Bill Bassett was the more powerful, you could have gotten a good argument over it in the fifties. Haggerty had the higher prestige, a more worldly man. He was more effective in Sacramento. But Bassett was a very powerful satrap in his own feudal area.

Support From Blacks

Dutton: To return to the black community, the best known one in northern California then was Byron Rumford, a state assemblyman who long was getting elected on his own in Alameda County. He was independent. In southern California, there was Gus Hawkins, who started getting elected to the state assembly in the mid-thirties. Black politics, let's say going up into the early sixties, was even more incumbent dominated and don't-rock-the-boat than now. The black ministers were probably more influential then than now, as they had been in the South going back hundreds of years. This structure institutionalized and conservatized the whole process significantly up until the civil rights movement of the sixties although even that is an outgrowth of earlier black politics, as I tried to show in my 1971 book. The social structuring within the black society also has been sharper than often seen from outside, especially by 'white politics.' And that was particularly so in the fifties.

You really had to plug into a few black political or ministerial figures or a few black businessmen and black newspapers and radio stations. That's true of the white society. (We're talking about degrees now.) But it was more true there and then. The black who got himself elected--let's say like a Gus Hawkins--by the mid-fifties he had developed a very substantial domination of the area. Twenty years of incumbency, twenty years of name recognition, of not being challenged, plugging into the right white-establishment things.

Fry: They had more unity because they had a larger enemy outside?

Dutton: Well, something looser than 'unity.' They had a larger enemy outside. But black politicians tried to exert control only of their own turf. They might speak around the state occasionally, but none tried to develop power networks. That was left to the NAACP, Democratic party ties and a few other broad relations.

The result was that if you were trying to run a statewide campaign, you had to plug in to each of these separate blacks. People would say, "Well, you had to do that with the whites in their districts." Yes, especially district by district. But then the whites had more networks of power in their pluralism than the blacks. Which is probably predictable and even inevitable. Roger Kent's letter talks about that, talking to state legislators.

The "Loner" Campaign

Dutton: The philosophy of Pat's campaign in '58, and this is true of most California gubernatorial campaigns, was that he had his own boat to row. We wanted other political types and legislative candidates to

Dutton: be with us. We didn't want the media to say that the Democrats were split. But there was also a common political perception that "they aren't going to do very much for us, and we can't do very much for them. The more that we Democratic candidates try to group together, the fewer other independents and liberal or moderate Republican voters we're going to get. Also, we might be able to get some floating votes out there that would be for Pat Brown that won't be for other Democratic candidates, as Fred [S.] Farr in Monterey County." So the result is that incumbents at the various levels of elective office tend to go their own way. That was certainly true in '58.

One of the great discussions in the back rooms of Democratic campaigns in California in those days was, Would the statewide candidates (particularly Pat, who was the only proven vote-getter) go on the slate mailing piece with all the other Democrats? In '58, illustrative of the whole campaign we went on the slate mailing pieces just to keep other wings of the party quiet. We gave them money from our substantial fund-raising to show that we were with them. But the truth of the matter is, we just wanted them to go away until the election. [laughs]

Fry: It was characterized later by someone, I think Totten Anderson, as a loner campaign.*

Dutton: Very much so, yes. It was a loner campaign. We were not trying to run away from people. We just didn't want to stir things up. We had things going for us. We had Pat's name recognition. We had the Republican division. We had a huge victory in the primary. We were trying to build on our momentum. We did not want to start giving up part of our assets, our credit, at that stage.

The philosophy--some people might say rationalization--was that if we build a great momentum here, a snowball, that is going to carry along a lot of other Democrats, especially the other statewide nominees and some state assembly and senate candidates. That was not an after-the-fact conclusion.

I used to argue that with Phil Burton, Roger Kent, and some of the other people two or three times a week.

This is the whole argument of shirttails and politics. Shirttails won't work unless the lead candidate wins very big--and sometimes not then. We argued in '58: the bigger, the more impressive the Brown campaign, the more that's going to benefit other Democrats. Let that speak for itself. Don't make us belabor it.

*Western Political Quarterly, op. cit.

Fry: But wasn't the Brown campaign rather monolithic itself?

Dutton: Yes. That was the basic pattern of California politics from Hiram Johnson on. It was the basic pattern of the Earl Warren period. Who the heck were we? Only one self-consciously Democratic governor had been elected in this century, and he was not a great success. Who were we to challenge the basic historical pattern?

The name of the game was to get elected with a reasonable candor as to party label, philosophy, and program; we would do almost anything to avoid intra-party fights. But that was best done in the circumstances by walking away or being quiet or refusing to be challenged and confronted, not by Republicans, but by Democrats.

Fry: Yes, I noted that at the CDC convention in February, 1958, that Pat was nominated, of course, and then he left. He just left the convention.

Dutton: That's correct. I was left there to see everybody and shake hands. As the newspapers carried or distorted stories on the CDC, we knew they were not pluses. For example, CDC was talking black progress. We were for black progress. We had a major campaign point about it. But we thought it should be kept in context with other problems--as the CDC and Republican media would not do. Emphasize black progress in the black communities. In that pre-civil rights period, the question was, Why talk to the conservatives of the Central Valley or Orange County or San Diego about that? We preferred news stories to emphasize the problems and interests targetted by the various areas. We were not trying to talk statewide about organized labor, because southern California, particularly L.A., was more or less an open union town. This is really a question of trying to talk to your various audiences.

The CDC wanted everybody to be a liberal. Well, California was not and would not be a liberal state unless Pat got elected. When Pat got elected, he was more liberal all the time. In his opening address to the legislature he talked about responsible liberalism. He embraced the label. But there is a timing for the public sector that ideologues ignore, to the damage of their values. Pat moved California along in its liberalism--and did so by ignoring his simplistic detractors.

Political Process and Governmental Process

Dutton: Part of the problems of the CDC, and an awful lot of activist liberals, is they want to do certain things in the political process that are better done in the governmental process. There are a lot of people now, I happen to think--Jimmy Carter is the classic example--who want

Dutton: to do things in the governmental process that are better done in the political process. People should separate what is achievable in a political period or time or context from what is achievable in the governmental setting.

Hale Champion, to use an example of somebody you're going to talk to--Hale in my opinion is awfully good at government. He's awfully good at administration, but I think Hale doesn't understand the political process nearly as much. He tends to draw on the credit and good will that the prior politicians, or the political process, builds up. I have no problems with that. But he is less an elective, electing type. It's no criticism. It's just that there are different roles and functions in the overall public sector.

Fry: Specifically, do you mean politically that you don't try to set specific policy? Is that what you mean by governmental?

Dutton: I believe that in politics you talk about basic values, you talk about goals, you even deal somewhat in hopes and fears and illusions, and you personalize to a great extent.

Fry: But you don't set definite programs?

Dutton: Well, we had our eight-point program. We were talking about things like the state water plan, FEPC [Fair Employment Practices Commission], an economy development agency or consumer advocate, abolishing cross filing, very specific kinds of things.

But the public is more concerned with a direction, a sense of trust and choice, a basic philosophy than with details. Their lives are busy and difficult--political leaders have to carry the burden, and flexibility, of fleshing out and later detailing the broader commitments of the campaign. You should be talking about what your goals are, what you want to do for California, what kind of society you want to help make, and what are a half dozen major steps to be taken, at most. Why get down into the actual pieces of legislation? You don't know what kind of a legislature you'll get. You'll need to adapt to the economic and political situation from time to time. What one can do in an election year is quite different from what one could do, or will be doing several years later.

In a campaign you're dealing with the general public, some of the power establishment, and the media primarily. Once you get elected, you're dealing with the legislative branch, with the bureaucracy, even with difficult personnel in the media, with a quite different cast of characters. It's just different people, different needs, different times.

In the '58 campaign, we were essentially trying to maximize the vote, and that meant don't talk negatives, potential negatives on too many details. If we hadn't talked, let's say, about black progress

Dutton: or black programs--the majority of Californians were not terribly receptive. Our polls showed that they didn't like it. But if you didn't talk of it, you wouldn't be honest, to begin with; secondly, the blacks would say that you're hypocritical or you're not really for us. So you had to address that very large problem and do it in an open way. But you did not have to talk about only it--or it everywhere. One criticism of Pat during the '58 campaign was, "You're talking about the FEPC mainly before blacks and white liberal groups in Beverly Hills. You're not talking about FEPC in San Bernardino and Santa Ana and Bakersfield and Fresno." Absolutely correct! [laughter] You'll do more in terms of social reform or restructuring if you persuade them, than if you try to ram things down their throat. If you give them too much bitterness or just unpleasantness, you're not going to get elected, and, two, you're going to exhaust all your energies over negatives instead of trying to go where the political opportunities may allow something constructive to be done.

Other Statewide Candidates: Engle and Cranston

Fry: On this "loner" business, I guess early on you still had a lot of concern about who else would be running for other offices.

Dutton: Not very much.

Fry: For Senator especially?

Dutton: No, the Senate prospect was fairly well determined. Why? Because Clair Engle as a congressman had decided as early as late 1955 that he was going to run for the Senate in 1958.

Fry: But others wanted it, like Cranston?

Dutton: Yes, but Clair had gone statewide early and effectively. Pat was a good friend of Cranston, Engle, and everybody else like that. Pat's style was essentially, "Go at it, and see what you can do." What these guys really wanted--Pat had the statewide name--they wanted him to embrace them.

Engle had been fairly smart. He'd gone around the state as a congressman in '56 campaigning for Stevenson. Even though he was from a rural area like the northern Sacramento Valley, he had gotten himself in the L.A. Times often, got the Democratic congressional group in Washington tacitly to help him, touched all the labor bases, and had really been nice to almost everybody. He wasn't yet running, so he could be very courting. He came from a moderately conservative, rural Democratic district, and that was rather sympático with

Dutton: southern California. He had launched himself very early. He had been state chairman of the Stevenson campaign with Pat specifically to try to get himself local contacts, local activists beyond his own district. In short, he had laid the groundwork.

Cranston had laid some groundwork through the CDC, but Alan had tended--and I think he'd admit this now--to pocket himself early in his career in the liberal activists and found a hard time getting beyond that. Engle finessed him on that.

In that showdown for a while--and this is classic in California politics--the candidate who has established himself with the general public and particularly the media will beat the activist when you go to the voters almost every time. Why? Because the activists don't have anything to deliver besides a fairly small fraction. And they usually are so overshifted in an ideological sense and faction ridden that the picture they convey of themselves through the press as often as not, loses more votes than it gains. So an intra-party politician is not usually a match in California--there are a few exceptions--for a voter politician.

Alan did that for a while, and he'd be the first one to admit it. Alan came to recognize that starting the CDC was a great thing and a great base, but that he also needed another constituency. In running for controller and getting that, he established himself with what I would say was a business, self-interest constituency, the inheritance-tax appraisers.

Alan, with no criticism of him, utilized ideological politics and then special-interest politics, and then more general-interest approaches.

Fry: What special interests? Do you mean the appraisers?

Dutton: Yes. The controller's office was the one California office with real patronage--not huge numbers, but very handsome incomes--\$20,000 to \$100,000 or more for each appraiser appointed. That prospect gives interested supporters considerable motivations to work for the election of a controller favorably disposed towards him. The reality of that has long been recognized by the press and political sector.

The only thing comparable, even better, with Warren and Knight, but also Pat to some extent--although he always tried to keep it to a minimum--was the savings and loan charters. Savings and loan charters had to be given on the basis of economic feasibility studies, competence, and financial acumen. But I think anybody who is a close student of California politics of the forties, fifties, and early sixties has to recognize that the savings and loan charters were a very significant area of support. [laughs]

Fry: Through what commission?

Dutton: Who gave those? If you look at Warren, Knight, and Pat Brown appointees, usually one of their closest confidants did. Pat put Frank Mackin in as Savings and Loan Commissioner.

This is how complicated politics always are when you look at it closely. The cynic would immediately say, "Aha, he did it so he could try to make sure that this or that group or person got one of those." That's somewhat true, but that again is not primarily true.

The truth of the matter is you put one of your closest friends in to make sure the temptation is not irresistible and the incumbent governor then blown out of the water by corruption. Many if not most of the very large savings and loans organizations in California were originally close to key political figures and various sponsors were among the big contributors in both Republican and Democratic campaigns --and sometimes to both.

Thoughts on the Oil Industry

Fry: We've been trying to sort out the oil issue. Talk about factions! You've really got a lot of them in oil.

Dutton: It didn't sort out very neatly. The very big oil companies were not as effective or successful, in a political sense or legislative sense, as the intermediate-sized ones--as Bill Keck of Superior. The cliché was that the multi-millionaires could beat the billionaires in California politics anytime they want. [chuckles] The reason is that Standard Oil of California and so forth were bureaucratized over the years, ponderous, institutionally incapable of responding acutely and had too much at stake to be able to do so. The intermediate companies and their operators were only worth \$100,000,000 or so! [laughs] They tended to be owned by specific personalities who had made the original money and were more freewheeling.

Fry: Who had less to lose?

Dutton: The multimillionaire as compared to the billionaire. The multimillionaire was a greater risk taker in both business and politics than the billionaire. They're less institutionalized, and still at the level of personalized business.

The classic example of all this was a ballot showdown several times between the 'sharks' (as big oil was depicted) and the 'minnows' (as the intermediates characterized themselves). That was one of the big billboard fights in California politics of the last fifty years. I mentioned Harry Lerner. Harry Lerner was the campaign

Dutton: manager for the multimillionaires. Harry Lerner made so much money off of that one campaign that he retired to Palm Springs and has only done infrequent work since! [laughter]

Fry: That was the one with the pig wallowing in the mud, and it didn't say anything!

Dutton: That's right. That was Harry's creation.

Fry: This was the Keck group that hired him?

Dutton: That's correct, Bill Keck of Superior Oil. Superior Oil was essentially trying to give the shaft to Standard of California and the majors. That fight goes back in California politics to the turn of the century really. You could write a whole book on this. The independents generally have won when it has gotten to the extreme of the ballot, out where they fight in public. At the level of the state legislature, they were also terribly influential but often not as influential as Standard Oil of California.

Standard Oil of California had--what's his name--Al Shults as its Sacramento representative in this period--able and quiet and a friend from his college days of one of the two or three key state senators. Another representative was 'Judge' Garibaldi, who had been a superior court judge. He had the Sacramento lobbying role for various liquor, billboards, oil and other groups--a considerable parlay.

Fry: He had the big oil companies?

Dutton: I forget which ones he had.

Fry: From your perspective and overview, what can you tell us in general about whether this influence of Standard and also of the independents was good or bad?

Dutton: At that stage of my life, I certainly thought it was all bad.

Fry: Now, here you are an attorney for--

Dutton: For the Saudis, and thus deep into oil. But I don't want to be in defense of the oil industry--

Fry: You may want to put it under seal. [laughs]

Dutton: No. I think that the political implications of their very great economic power need to be closely monitored and kept within bounds, including legislation and regulations. But liberals have not been terribly effective in coping with the oil industry over the last ten years, because they deal in rhetoric and slogans. They don't look at realities.

Dutton: Actually, the oil industry is less centralized and less profitable than the American communications networks and major segments of that industry, which are also more powerful. The oil industry is little more or less centralized than the other main American industries. But it's a basic industry dealing with energy and therefore at a sensitive economic crossroads. It has to be well scrutinized there.

Looking at the Pentagon, U.S. Postal Service, AMTRAK and other governmental operations, I don't think energy can be provided as well through governmental instrumentalities. And the power concentration would be worse--without a watchdog.

Fry: Do you mean through regulation?

Dutton: This is central to criticism at the base of American politics right now: What can the government process do? What should it do? Those of us who believe in humanistic, rational, social values have thought government could do more than it has shown itself capable of.

So what should be done about the oil companies? In terms of Sacramento, I think disclosure requirements, regulation, environmental limits, taxation, all kinds of things. I will say that the oil companies were not nearly as influential politically in California as liquor, billboards, and a number of other interests.

Fry: Back in the fifties and early sixties, I guess the main issue was Long Beach's monopoly on their oil and the fact that the taxes were all going to the city and the city was subsidizing. Then the other one was this business of regulation for what they called 'conservation,' which I think, if I can understand this right, meant that there would be some regulation of how much oil can be taken out of certain sections.

Dutton: There was that. That was because offshore leasing was to begin in the Santa Barbara Channel. A bigger issue in terms of, let's say, political drama, simplification--both for the campaign and then the legislature--was that California was the only one of the oil-producing states at that time without a depletion tax, a severance tax. We proposed that. We went to the mat twice in the legislature; we really tried to get it. We went all out, and we struck out.

We struck out because of a combination of things. One, we didn't have the votes, of course. Two, key senators like George Miller, who were generally much more liberal in practice and in philosophy than Pat Brown ever thought of being, blocked us.

Fry: Miller was very powerful.

Dutton: Here again, and this is terribly important in a political study like you're doing (it doesn't get enough attention) when you're a governor or a president, you have to deal with the interrelationship of all these issues and personalities. Liberals, academics, the press, and the public tend to look at each of these matters in its own separate frame of reference.

Fry: Yes, and it makes a jagged profile.

Dutton: When the politician has to cope with the interaction of the many various parts, they say, "He's a sell-out and a cop-out."

Let's say you're governor or president. You want issue A, B, and C. You would also like D, E, and F. But if you try to get D, you're going to alienate somebody who's essential to get you A, B, and C. You've got to decide what your priorities are, pay your price, and not regret it.

I personally think that the same process pertains to our personal lives and human relationships. It annoys me the extent to which ideological purists and academics are not willing to recognize that the same dynamics pertain more generally than to just politics and are unavoidable and probably desirable. Having to make hard choices as to priorities is part of both growth and survival--and necessary even if the 'best' choices are passed over.

Another key point is that politics is glue to hold society together as well as clarity to upgrade it. It is holding things together as well as sharpening things.

A Trade-off for the California Water Plan

Fry: One example of that was the relationship between the California Water Plan and the oil interests, who had a stake in how the oil largess that came from federal taxes that became available to California would be divided in the state.

Dutton: Yes, that was important. Remember Pat Brown, as attorney general, had been the one who had fought for the state interest in tidelands oil, as the issue was called in those days. He had gone up to the U.S. Supreme Court. It was one of his very good political issues, one of the ones that proved that he had made major fights and would go to the mat.

But that was not the real trade-off. The big trade-off relevant to the state water plan was one of the great compromises of Pat's gubernatorial period. I think it was justified, although it certainly can be argued over. He wanted the state water plan very

Dutton: much. It was the closest to a mandate out of his election. From the perspective then, it looked absolutely essential for California to maintain its population growth and economic viability. It also was great in terms of 'making the desert bloom' and expanding the area of human cultivation--which were the values and the perceptions from time immemorial down to the 'think smaller' outlook of some in the last ten years.

The state water plan was almost number one in terms of the fifties, not of particular groups but of the general society. Warren had popularized and worked on it, and Knight had tried to get it enacted. Special-interest fights and one section of the state against another blocked that. Pat was for it; he had to be for it. If you weren't, you were not addressing yourself to the governor's role.

He had promised it. How to achieve it? Well, there was one state senator who could obstruct it: Hughie Burns, who was president pro tem of the state senate and the most powerful man there. One of Hughie's main constituents was a very large landholder; also Hughie would say, the development of western Fresno County and the irrigation district there was central to his outlook and office.

We had to have Hughie Burns in order to get the state water plan through the state senate. Unruh could get it through the assembly. But we couldn't get it past Burns and Miller, who came from Martinez, on the Sacramento Delta in the San Francisco Bay, and didn't want those waters coming down the Sacramento River diverted through the Delta down to southern California. So there were two very formidable obstacles. We knew that we needed George on certain issues. But not necessarily on this if we had Burns. If we got Burns, we could finesse what was likely to be Miller's continuing resistance.

Pat first tried to persuade Burns. But Hughie recognized his strong position. Pat then tried to count enough senate votes without Burns. But that was a dead end. So he decided finally, right or wrong, that if he was going to get the state water plan, he had to get Hughie Burns. What did Hughie Burns want? He wanted the man who was the state insurance commissioner, F. Britton McConnell, a Republican appointment, continued in office. He didn't want a new one. He just wanted the man who was already there.

I think a fair and honest statement was that McConnell was essentially the insurance industry's best friend in California. He was a Knight appointee. He was well respected by the business community and the newspapers. But we still knew that essentially he was someone the industry liked.

A liberal cynic would say, "People were really paying hidden taxes through insurance premiums that a vigorous insurance commissioner might change." In any event, Pat paid the necessary

Dutton: price for the state water program and the insurance appointee of 1959 was Hughie Burns's. In social casts, insurance regulation might be said to have helped seal the California water program.

There's a funny little footnote sequel to this. Pat reappointed McConnell and that was announced. But neither Pat nor Burns was related to the two. In a sense, Pat was appointing an insurance commissioner and also wooing a key state senator. Pat and the rest of us assumed--a dangerous state of mind--that Burns would then be helpful. The water plan went through the assembly. Then the bill was in the committee in the senate, and everybody thought we had the votes on the floor. You should talk to Pat about this. Late one morning Pat and I were downstairs in the governor's office in the capitol. Pat gets a call--I think it was from Julian Beck, who was the legislative assistant on the gubernatorial staff. He said, "The water plan is bottled up in committee, and we can't get it out."

Pat's early gubernatorial reputation was at stake on this. It was the number one priority that we wanted and that the press in the state wanted. Almost everybody did. A consensus had developed that the water program was number one.

It was Burns's committee. Steve Teale was on it, and there were others. We were lacking one vote, and we couldn't get it, so we couldn't get the bill out. We knew the night before that we had a problem. But we thought we had the votes, and Burns would be, at worst, tepidly supportive. Then they met.

Beck finally called back again and said, "Hughie Burns has something he seems to want. You've got to talk with him."

Pat said, "Well, we've got him." [laughter]

Fry: Pat had already given him the insurance commissioner!

Dutton: Yes. But Burns, with gratitude, said that was a separate matter. Hughie was very careful. He never asked directly on anything.

Fry: He wouldn't tell you what he wanted?

Dutton: No, we had to figure that out, to a great extent. Pat then got on the phone. By now, it was one or two in the afternoon, and the reporters all know something was astir.

I think Hughie came down and had one or two very nice talks with Pat. Nobody was asking for anything. Everybody was very friendly. It was just, "Pat, the bill's got terrible problems. Maybe we can come back next year. It may need more consideration. It's got some technical flaws."--the way politicians obfuscate with each other.

Dutton: Finally, Pat called the very large landowner who was Hughie's principal constituent in Fresno County and a long-time friend of Pat's as well. He flew up on an urgent basis in a private plane--likely his own. He and Pat talked and figured out what the problem was. Some adjustments were made favorable to the area west of Fresno. In effect, Pat had to do something a second time for Hughie to get this bill out of committee. Then it finally got enacted.

Fry: You don't remember what it was he was holding out for?

Dutton: I cannot recall, no. You might ask Ralph Brody who was the substantive water expert on the governor's staff and much later went to work managing a big irrigation district in the Fresno area.

Fry: Or was Pat just caught in the pressure?

Dutton: It was a classic political maneuver.

Fry: Somewhere I picked up that FEPC was involved. Was that part of this?

Dutton: Not that I recall. That had problems. But the water plan was sort of the center of the whole display statewide. In effect, Pat had to pay twice. [laughs] It's a good example of how you've got to be very careful. Part of the fault was state legislative politics. Part may have also been that Pat was not a tough, or precise negotiator or bargainer.

Fry: You don't remember what the price was? I hope Pat will remember.

Dutton: Ask him or Brody what was done when the water bill got tied up in the senate committee. He'll remember very well.

I used to say to Pat that there were only four or five days in the year and a half that I was with Pat after he got elected that he really had to earn his pay. The rest of it was handshaking and hand holding or planning ahead or just treading water. The Chessman case was one of those crucial times, and certainly the day that Hughie Burns tied up the water plan after we thought we had it. [laughs]

Fry: What was Burns's connection to insurance? Was it just a contributor in the background?

Dutton: We never were sure. He would just say that it was a terribly important industry.

George Miller, Jr. and Hugh Burns

Dutton: Hughie had been in the state legislature for many years. He was a mortician originally. He had a small oil distribution company of his own in Fresno County. He had land. By '59 he was a charming guy, but no intellectual fireball. There was nothing strident or hostile or rancorous in his personality. A nice person, and not tough like George Miller could be. George Miller was a formidable individual, intellectually and otherwise.

Fry: How did he and Miller get along? My sense is that they were not the same ideologically.

Dutton: No, no. Hughie was a conservative Democrat, or a lot of people would say a Republican in Democratic skin. He always won by cross-filing or scaring off opposition with the help of the key people in his area. Burns and Miller got along like lions in the state senate. They'd accomodate or leave each other alone. Each of them has his own area of turf. "I don't mess with your bills, and you don't mess with mine." Such figures get far more accomplished by knowing what to leave alone, as well as what to push or pick up.

George should have been the leader of the senate, but he never aspired to the title and I think properly. Often legislative leadership burns a figure up and is a whole special bag of talent. Miller wanted the reality of influence on particular matters but was not so concerned with the forms of authority. Lyndon Johnson was a good Senate leader and in my opinion a very ordinary president. Jesse Unruh--a great legislative leader, a great analytical mind, could handle myriad problems at once and trade things off well. It's funny how that same type of skill and personality does not translate well to executive jobs usually. Men like John Kennedy make very indifferent legislators--Pat would likely have been a disaster as a legislator--but both did relatively well in an executive role.

Fry: Did you ever hear that in the latter years of the Knight administration, the Democrats in the legislature really had an understanding that they would not go along with the water plan unless the governor was a Democrat?

Dutton: No, I never heard that. I tend to be skeptical about it, only because the legislators were never that cohesive and they were not that interested in really contributing to the governorship.

It's classic in American politics that high incumbents of a legislative body are not terribly anxious to have a member of their own party take over the top executive role, because they are number one until they suddenly have to give way or subordinate themselves to that other one.

Tom Lynch as Candidate

Fry: Were there other people you could use for Pat's campaign, like Tom Lynch?

Dutton: Tom had been chief assistant in the DA's office of San Francisco. He and Pat had been very close friends--Irish Catholics, San Francisco, their families close together, from the nineteen forties, and certainly through the fifties. Tom Lynch was a tough, wry, at times a little bit bitter individual. He seemed to think he was smarter than Pat. He might have been. And certainly he was tougher. He thought that he should have moved ahead as much as Pat, and people can make arguments for that. He was perfectly willing to be a 'heavy' in various situations. Here again though, Tom was not that involved in gubernatorial politics just because he was DA of San Francisco. He had his own problems and tasks to handle.

Like Pat before he had become governor, Tom was never terribly active in statewide Democratic politics. When Tom tried to run statewide, he had problems because he was trying to do exactly what Pat had done, but he was doing it about ten years later. The political environment had changed. And Pat had worked at his build up for years; Tom was a hard worker but did not suffer fools and was not comfortable with many liberals in southern California. Tom never could see why things didn't break for him as they broke for Pat. He was never willing to see that it was a different arrangement, a different configuration and mood--and that he and Pat were different in many ways.

Tom was a direct, blunt person. He would handle some things for Pat. Tom would say, "That's southern California. That's party politics."

In these situations some people become the heavy and enjoy that role. Most people, and this includes myself certainly, don't like that role. You may do it, or you may have to do it. But you're trying to avoid it to a great extent, both for political survival and out of personality. Tom was often Pat's hearing, as I sometimes was. Pat was not averse to having a situation work out that way.

After I left Sacramento, for example, Hale had the role to a great extent. Unruh couldn't stand Hale, and I think Hale couldn't stand Unruh. The reason for that to a great extent, was that Hale was responsible, able, and had a rather blunt personality. He was perfectly willing to tell the legislature or tell Unruh, "We can't afford that," or "The Governor isn't for that."

Pat Brown and Fred Dutton: The Working Relationship

Dutton: A number of people were often Pat's nay-sayers.

Fry: Yes, a governor really has to have that.

Dutton: Yes. He really does, and particularly a guy like Pat. Pat's style was always to go around and ask everybody, "What do you think? What do you think?" The great criticism was that he'd sometimes take the last person's advice. That wasn't so. This technique of Pat's, at the time, used to frustrate me because I tend to think you analyze things and try to figure it out; one needs to get some sounding from other people, but you basically go with what your own conclusions are. Pat is much more sensitive to the political nuances. He is willing to endlessly seek them out in others--and look for changes and differences of shading.

I feel that's true of most major politicians. Most of them frequently say, "What do you think? What's going on?" They try to draw out your attitudes, reactions, and always a little bit more political intelligence. But that approach can also make a person look like a weathervane, an opportunist--superficial, without his own thinking. Pat was often ridiculed for his advice-seeking on a sixty-second basis. But it had a use.

Pat had special trouble with this approach in the Chessman case. Here was a capital punishment case, and he was always asking people what they thought he should do. Herb Caen, the San Francisco Chronicle columnist, had a couple of items, I remember. Pat Brown was asking what he should do about executing Chessman, and then Herb went into sort of a satirical bit of his own. Then Herb later on had an item, something to the effect that, "Pat Brown is still doing his popularity test whether or not Chessman should be executed."

Pat was just doing what he did with everything. It was always, "What do you think? How should I handle this problem?" Well, some things don't lend themselves to that technique.

Fry: It seems to me that Pat would probably use you a great deal for analyzing and bringing together all of the factors inherent in a given situation and laying it out for him. Is this what really happened, or did he not use you as much as he could have?

Dutton: I never had any problems with Pat.

Fry: He used all of your talents?

Dutton: Yes, I think so. His and my relationship, I think is a fairly common one in politics. Yes, he used me. He was established. He was the guy on stage. At the same time, I was a young, ambitious or activist

Dutton: person, intensely analytic, and fairly creative, which has been my talent in politics.

What I'm saying is that I was growing and developing; Pat was a catalyst as well as opening opportunities for me. His is a far deeper, more complex, sensitive, sophisticated, and elusive personality and intellect than external appearances indicate.

Pat reached out to get me to begin with, but after that I was not hesitant: for example, thinking he should run when he was hesitant about it. I wasn't hesitant. I was presumptuous. You may see some of my memos to him. I occasionally would write one which said, "Without meaning to be presumptuous, I suggest. . ." And then I would be very presumptuous. [chuckles] Certainly Pat used me fully, and certainly I think I had full intellectual and working involvement. I finally left Pat because I had always been interested in national issues. When JFK invited me to come to Washington the morning after he was nominated president at the 1960 Democratic national convention, I jumped at the opportunity. As I think I've said to you before, Pat never understood that or why I would want to leave Sacramento. After I had gotten him to run for governor and stayed there a year and a half, wasn't I being disloyal? He never said it. He said, "Fine, Fred. If you want to do it, you should do it." But I got the feedback from others. There was a certain coolness for six months or so. But Pat never did understand why anybody thirty-six years old would want to go from Sacramento to Washington! [laughs]

Fry: It's that California viewpoint! Although Pat thought about that for himself occasionally.

Dutton: Well, that's different. [laughs]

Fry: He thought the White House wouldn't have been bad.

Dutton: Presidents and governors, they tend to think that everybody is there to serve them.

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Dutton: One of the characteristics of Pat's personality, and of those who seek such offices, is that it requires self-preoccupation, plus mollifying and sublimating others. Pat was more ambitious than often realized. As Herndon, Lincoln's law partner, said of Lincoln: "His ambition was a small motor. But it never rested."

Bernice Brown and the Decision to Run in 1958

Dutton: Another thing about Pat was that--and this was one of the great, tremendous qualities of the man--he's always trying to grow. He's a very existential--the critics of Pat say he is "too conservative,

- Dutton: too square, too marshmallowy." They don't realize this is a tremendously regenerative human being--his interests, his vitality, his energy. He's always on the go both physically and mentally. One of Pat's cliches--he used to say, "You don't have to have brains in politics. You've got to have good glands." [laughs]
- Fry: Which brings us to Bernice. What influence did she have on him? Some people have said she had quite of bit of influence in government.
- Dutton: In government and personally, she certainly did. She did over the course of Pat's entire adult life. Bernice has been the great strength of Pat's life. Bernice had a deliberate, detached, inner strength which Pat thought he had but didn't. Even now when Washington journalists go out to California to look at Jerry, I say, "You've got to talk to Bernice more than Pat." They all know Pat and know about him.

But the contrasting, or complementary, qualities of the two are important. Pat is the night law school guy. He never went beyond high school except for night law school. Bernice is a college graduate and went to Berkeley. Pat's father ran a bunch of indifferent business efforts--nickelodeons, movie houses, a floating crap game. Bernice's father was captain of the San Francisco police force. Pat was born a Roman Catholic and returned to that in his adult period after a thirty-year hiatus. Bernice is a flinty Protestant.

Both people, in my opinion, have great strength, but Pat's is sort of a warm, loving, outwardly soft strength. The core is tough, but there's an awful lot of 'in between.' Some people think flab. It isn't flab; it's something else. But Bernice is an analytical, firm, clear-headed person. Jerry is very much closer to Bernice's traits in many ways, in my opinion. In a sense, Jerry is Bernice's son more than Pat's son. He's both, and he gets a lot from both, but he's more Bernice.

To answer your question in terms of just '57, '58 or '59, is tough. Bernice is almost an intellectual in some ways, in my opinion. She has a first class mind. She's well informed. In some ways she can be opinionated. But she also has the restraint that women often have with successful men. She is very, very strong.

The irony of the situation is that Bernice did not want Pat to run for governor. Part of my early role was getting Pat to do what his whole career had been wanting to do and what he may have been beginning to chicken out on. If he had stayed as attorney general, as Pat and Bern looked at things in mid-'57, he'd have been sure of substantial pension rights. If he ran for governor and lost, those would not accumulate further. They thought hard about that. And he ran a risk of losing because the only Democrat to win in this century was Culbert Olson. Goodie Knight was an incumbent governor.

Dutton: Bill Knowland was the Senate minority leader. U.S. Webb had earlier stayed as California's respected attorney general for about three decades--respected, safe in his job, a useful public figure. Pat thought about that as well as his upward itch.

Fry: It was tough.

Dutton: Bernice looked at all that, and she said, "We've got a bunch of kids coming along. They're young. They have college ahead of them. I'm living in a nice house in the Twin Peaks area, but it's not all that great and sort of crowded. We haven't really put any money away."

She's a practical woman, a person who was always trying to look out for the family while Pat was out fencing with windmills. Pat, ever since the nineteen forties, had been out shaking hands and talking about how he would come home on weekends exhausted, go to bed Saturday afternoon, and then spend twenty-four hours in bed. That was most of the weekend. Then he'd get recharged and go out politicking again, his ebullient self.

But Bernice at that stage had reluctances, about the political rat race, and Pat began to a bit, too. In July or August of '57 he was coming up to the decision which had to be made. We all knew that. Pat was interested. He was flirting with it. He was wanting to be drawn into it. But then he'd pull back when he looked at the danger of losing the security of his office. He could have had the L.A. Times, the Hearst papers, and the Chronicle's endorsement for attorney general against almost any Republican. He had a sure thing versus a very chancy thing.

Bernice at that stage didn't want him to run. Then the irony--we're back to oil--Ed Pauley owned an island out in Hawaii called Shark Island. The reason is that the University of California maintained two shark study experimental tanks there which have tax advantages for Ed. [laughter] Pat and Bernice went out there at Pauley's invitation for a good vacation. Also present were Ed Pauley and Ed Carter, who was also on the board of regents and head of Carter-Hawley-Hale department stores. They were very much for Pat not running for governor. They were for his staying as attorney general. They would then have their good friend Goodie Knight as governor and their good friend Pat Brown as attorney general.

Pat had me all involved by then putting together ideas and a rough plan for the campaign, talking about it, working on it, writing speeches and memos. It was at his initiative, but I was buoyant and carried away with it. I had moved from LA to San Francisco as chief assistant and attorney general in the criminal law division, which was really working with Pat personally.

Dutton: When Pat was invited to Shark Island by Pauley, I recognized what the exercise was all about, how Pauley and Carter were going to say, "Sure, you should stay where you are. Assure your pension rights and job security. You're still a young man in your early fifties. You can run for governor in four years after Goodie will be through and in his sixties."

To counterbalance Pauley's potential persuasiveness with Pat, I drafted a letter to go to somebody through key Democrats in the state. I used the UAW auto-typewriters in San Francisco. The letter went to all members of the Democratic county and state central committees in the state, contributors, union leaders and others, saying, "We're approaching the next gubernatorial campaign. Who do you think the candidates should be? Do you think Pat Brown should run?" It was transplanted in that the Democrats really had nobody else. The liberals were not happy with Pat, but they had no alternative.

So we quickly got all these letters back with, "Certainly Pat Brown should run." I would bundle up the replies as they came in, fifty or sixty a day, and airmail them to Pat at Shark Island in Hawaii. He was getting them all the time that Pauley and Carter were trying to talk him into deciding the other way.

There's nothing a politician likes to think more than that he's being drafted. Then they think it's not ambition that's making them run for office; it's the people out there, and the challenge is a huge responsibility and obligation. So we went through this exercise, and I won't say this convinced Pat and made up his mind, but it sure neutralized the Pauley-Carter exercise.

Fry: Had Pat known that you were going to do that?

Dutton: He knew that I was doing something approximately like canvassing key Democrats. But when he saw these letters from people in Sutter County and Tuolumne County and scores of other places, it was impressive and ego-satisfying. He certainly then couldn't make up his mind against running while out in Hawaii. He had to come back and look at the situation, and that finessed the discussions out there.

Carter and Pauley were very bright and knew what Bernice thought, so in effect they had a build-in, unwitting ally. And the setting reeked of the good life. Pat tends to want to go along with the advice he's getting and he had three people saying, "Look at this carefully. Be prudent; wait"--implicitly, "Don't run this time for governor." It was a no-lose situation for Carter and Pauley. If he didn't run for governor, they had a nice double-play. If he did run, they still had a good friend there.

Fry: So did they come out actively and support him?

Dutton: As to Carter, I'm not sure. Pauley did support Pat. He gave us some money. Pat and I had a few differences on Pauley once or twice. I didn't think Pat should be flying around in Pauley's plane, an oil plane several times. I thought it was bad politics. Pauley was a wealthy, older man. He had been Democratic national treasurer for Truman in '48 and a long-time California Democratic National Committeeman. He went to the Soviet Union for Truman, who also tried to make him Undersecretary of the Interior. But Harold Ickes shot that down in a famous vignette--not relevant here. He was a very sophisticated political person. Pauley was active and helpful and contributed generously.

Carter, I'm not sure. Carter contributed a little bit later, in '66, but not all that much. Pat reappointed Carter to the board of regents in '66, but even then Carter, as I recall, never did campaign for Pat. He was a Republican, had his Republican respectability and credentials and sought to keep those intact.

In contrast to Bernice's reluctance for Pat to run, when he became governor she was a person who did not kibitz or try to second guess. If you asked her a question on anything, she'd say what she thought very directly, sometimes point-blank, right between the eyes. [laughs] But she did not try to push and intrude. She had great dignity, even a little bit of chilliness at that stage. I think some people think Bernice is chilly. She's not at all. But there's aloofness and detachment about her.

The longer Pat was in office and when Pat then began to get in trouble, as the Chessman period and when he got beaten by Reagan in '66, Bernice was a real Rock of Gibraltar, keeping things together and strong. Bernice is a person who can let the thing go when there's no reason to intrude, then will move in very quietly (I'm not sure even she's aware she's doing it) and be a very steady influence when there's a constructive need for that. She's a first-class person, I think, by any test.

Fry: Did she have any ideas on legislation?

Dutton: I never heard her. She may have talked with Pat privately. I used to see her a lot. We were good friends. I'd go to the mansion often and travel with them. If you'd say, "Bernice, what do you think about and FEPC bill," or what do you think about this or that, she would tell you in a very rational, deliberate, well-thought-out way, not to belabor it, but she was very good. But, no, I never heard her try, unasked, to get into legislation. She was much more, and I think this is true of first-class political wives--which is a put-down because a woman, a person is more than that.

Fry: Yes, but they are overwhelmed by their husbands.

Dutton: Well, they are, yes. Yet that really was never true of Bernice despite Pat's super energy and self assertiveness. Bernice could get detachment about Pat. I assume if you lived with Pat, it's the only way you keep your sanity at times. Pat can be doing so many things, be so disorganized or elusive, like mercury slipping all over the place.

More on Dutton and Brown

Dutton: On the road with Pat, he'd be off making phone calls and seeing people: a governor always has all kinds of people trying to make contact with him, and Pat was always trying to keep everybody happy. Part of my job was to try to keep a tidy, overall picture. It was not just keeping his schedule met; I was constantly interested in the public perception of him and what was the historical record going to look like.

Pat's aides were always having to do a patch-up job, or trying to put a piece back in that he'd just given away, or to get something back that somebody thought they had got! [laughter] Sometimes I'd think what I was doing was what Pat really wanted me to do in that regard. Sometimes I could have been presuming. But to a great extent Pat would be nice to somebody and also assume larger considerations would be kept in balance. I would occasionally have to go back to someone to whom he had talked on something important and say, "No, we really can't do that because we'll lose a number of legislative votes," or "What will the publisher of the L.A. Examiner think?" or "That still has to be worked on more," things like that.

Fry: Yes, and his sense of helping someone leads him to--did you have problems with that?

Dutton: Endless generosity. Yes, very much so. There were times when Pat and I used to get rather up-tight with each other. I used to think that Pat, out of the needs of his own personality, or as a very effective politician, was giving away things. There were other times, in fairness to Pat, when he would think that I was being too analytical or not forthcoming, when he wanted to be spontaneous and even sort of diffuse.

You get in these personal relationships, and it's complicated. A good working relationship is one when the two people almost unconsciously anticipate each other.

Fry: Could you do that?

Dutton: Yes, Pat and I did that fairly well, I think from '57 through when I left. There were times, I'm sure, when Pat was frustrated with me, and God knows there were a lot of times when I was frustrated with him.

Dutton: The only time I ever threatened to quit Pat, and it was immature on my part, was when I was living in San Mateo, running the primary in '58. I objected to Ed Pauley in a situation. Pat was some place out on the road. I said something on the phone--I think I'd had a couple of drinks--like "Goddamn it, Pat, if you want Pauley to run the campaign, then let him run it."

A campaign director really doesn't have that right, in my opinion. When you sign aboard a campaign, unless the guy does something very major that you really don't believe in, you're stuck. If you made a bad judgment to begin with, you can go away afterwards. You can try to correct a social or political mistake, but I just don't think when you're very close in, when you're one of the two or three key people, when you sign in terribly close and intimate with a major figure, you're aboard till the ship either sinks or gets into harbor.

I think Pat and I had as good a working relationship as people can have in fast-moving, high-voltage situations. That didn't mean that we didn't have differences. Pat at times used to think that I was too demanding and perfectionist. At the end of the '59 legislative session, in which we had a great record, I was still trying to get the minimum-wage bill passed, which had not gotten through. With Pat's agreement, but reluctant agreement, I went down, and we had a final, two-day crash effort trying to force it through the assembly.

Pat never understood why I was still pushing that. Well, I don't know why I wanted it either. I think I was a bit compulsive. Pat, when he had enough, when he had a good record, particularly that first year, was quite content; he was the more mature and seasoned politician.

When I left--sometimes one can see oneself through others--Hale took the role I had. It became somewhat different. They were in the middle of a governmental term, not a political campaign. But Hale, like I, was the person who was supposed to bring order, analysis, and cohesiveness to the situation. My guess is that Pat, in his public career, always needed somebody like that. Bernice was probably doing that same thing in his private life. It isn't just a question of tidying up things in a staff sense. He's looking really for you to plan ahead, to tentatively plot the future. He'll make his own decisions finally, but he wants somebody who is going to help bring order to his personal universe.

When Hale moved over as finance director in Sacramento, I never thought Pat's close-in operation was quite as good again. Hale was doing the same function, but from a more distant position. It was only five minutes away in a walking sense, but Hale had all kinds of

Dutton: demands upon himself. He was both trying to perform that close-in role and maintain this other major job. Pat's executive secretaries then were able and good--Winslow Christian, Alarcon, etc.--but part of the problem was that the key advisory role, the pulling together of everything, became divided between Hale and the executive secretary to the governor. That let Pat, other people, and events slip through the many chinks Pat kept opening up to assure his own fluidity. But less coherence resulted overall.

Brown and Earl Warren: A Critique of Two Governorships

Dutton: How did Pat Brown make use of the people around him and his other resources and the interest groups and independent political-government channels to achieve his objectives, both in ambition and in substantive accomplishment? He, in my opinion, did quite well--not great, but very, very well.

Hardly anybody does a great job when contending with history. I think Earl Warren was a very uneven governor of California.

Fry: Because he did not use the people around him?

Dutton: I don't think Earl Warren did that much for California. Earl Warren was an honest and benign governor, but dull, uncreative, not challenging enough. Maybe that's all California needed during and after World War II--prosperity and growth were dynamic. But he never really took on Artie Samish. He never tried to clean up the state legislature. He let Collier's lead the exposé, and even then he didn't do all that much. He was good but not creatively great. In politics, he never really tried to liberalize and regenerate the Republican party. He was content to get elected and let it remain antediluvian. When he became chief justice, suddenly he was a much more activist human being.

I think Pat Brown accomplished somewhat more than Earl Warren, yet Warren was a very formidable figure. It's not a question of judging Pat versus Warren. It's really a question of how much did each do and how and with what use of his own capabilities. Warren, with a few exceptions, like his unsuccessful medical program, didn't touch the legislature. He'd go down and give his speech, but rarely press to follow it up, to implement it. He was a man who lived largely with the existing landscape. Pat, I think, tried to do considerably more, to the extent you can do something with the governorship. He called on the talents of the state and himself far more actively. While Pat was more into 'doing' than Warren, both were programmatic and largely lived with the prevailing premises.

Dutton: Jerry, in contrast, is publicly re-examining the premises--value judgment politics. That is probably a more public fundamental role. But it's the times; it's not just the person.

The Chessman Case

Fry: Was Jerry involved at all in anything when you were in Sacramento?

Dutton: In nothing except the Chessman case as far as I know. Jerry was in the seminary. Then he got out and he came back and went to school. I used to see him occasionally and briefly.

He did have that one tremendous effect. He was the guy who got Pat to change his mind that last night, the first time Chessman was to be executed. Pat had been vacillating all over the lot on that one, including in the press. The image that we always had to keep knocking down about Pat was that he was indecisive or blew with the wind, that he was weak, that he couldn't make up his mind. We were always trying to prove strength and decisiveness and focus. But in the Chessman case, he was publicly falling all apart.

He never believed in capital punishment even when he was DA. His Catholicism and inner sensibilities were deeply against it. He had long and at first hand (in dozens of cases as DA and AG) thought through the problem, and he was against the death sentence. Yet he had sworn to uphold the state constitution, and the state constitution provided for it, even said a man convicted of a felony a second time--as Chessman--had to be executed.

Phil Gibson was then chief justice of the state supreme court, a very sophisticated, able, pragmatic, thoughtful man. He had been one of Pat's long-time friends and certainly one of the senior statesmen of California for nearly twenty years. Pat and Phil had several private discussions on the Chessman case. It presented a major ethical and personally agonizing issue. It loomed large in the southern California press, in public opinion, and in Pat's second year as governor, with a make or break potential.

Phil was a Democrat, a liberal and probably against capital punishment. But he made it clear that Pat had no right to ignore California's constitution on this. The court couldn't let him do that. If there was criticism, it was that the chief justice of the supreme court and the governor of the state were even talking about something on which they were supposed to stay separate.

Fry: That's an important point because Pat had to decide whether he could get the supreme court to allow him to--

Dutton: Exactly. And Phil was reluctantly firm. "Absolutely, you cannot."

Fry: But Pat knew.

Dutton: He knew that.

Fry: Do you think Gibson had told--

Dutton: Yes, I do. It was probably very informal and indirect when Phil had his discussions with Pat. (He had several.) Phil knew Pat's strengths and weaknesses. Phil, remember, had been a politician before he was appointed to the court. He had been a key figure in Governor Olson's election in 1938, then his director of Finance in California. Previously, he had been a top LA lawyer, had come from Missouri and was a practical, down-to-earth man. Phil indicated to Pat, "You can't do it. You can't get away with it. The court wouldn't go with you, and you're going to smash up politically."

I was against capital punishment. We had fought hard trying to get it repealed. We couldn't. On the Chessman case I said, "Pat, you and I can be against capital punishment, but the state constitution controls you on Chessman. This is the process. If you go outside of it, why can't you go outside on anything major you want?"

Pat would say, "This is a human life that is involved." It was a very hard thing to cope with. In any event, Bernice and I were very much for Pat not using his clemency power since the state constitution interdicted it. I also argued it would deeply damage his gubernatorial or political power to do constructive things on education, mental health and almost all other issues.

On the afternoon before Chessman was to be executed, Bernice and I drove up together to Tahoe for the opening of the 1960 Winter Olympics the next day. Pat was to have come and join us. The last thing I did before I left the governor's office about 4:00 pm was to make sure that Pat agreed that he was going to leave the Chessman case alone, that he had made up his mind, that the execution would not be interfered with.

My wife and I stayed at a lovely 'cabin' house at Tahoe--it was owned by Ritter, who owns the San Jose paper. We were his guests. Stan Mosk, who was then attorney general and later became a member of the California Supreme Court, was also there. Early the next morning, I got up and went out in the snow to the car about 7:30 or 8:00 am and turned on the car radio to get the news. I don't know why I did it. I guess they didn't have a radio in the house. And it came--Pat had stayed the Chessman case.

Anybody who knew anything about the situation knew that the fat was in the fire, that Pat had done a thing that was going to be very damaging to him politically and to his substantive program,

Dutton: public and legislative standing, and possibly his political future. Pat was never the same politically, substantively dominant governor again that he had been from his large victory in '58 to the Chessman stay. He had won big in '58. He had won a great legislative record in '59. He was being thought about at least a little as a presidential possibility. He was developing as a major figure nationally. Chessman splattered all that. And even with lots of later healing and beating Nixon in '62, Humpty Dumpty never got put back together as strong again.

What happened was that after Bernice and I left Sacramento, Pat finished up the day at the governor's office. Then he went over to the governor's mansion to have dinner since Bernice wasn't there. He had invited Hale, Dick Tuck and Cecil Poole, who is now a federal judge, had been with Pat in the S.F. DA's office, was then his clemency secretary (we used to call Cecil "Ropes" because he had been so 'prosecutor minded'). I learned from subsequent conversation that at the dinner that night, Pat was vacillating again on trying to stretch his clemency authority or innate executive authority to stay Chessman's execution set for the next morning. That was the compassionate rather than legalistic way his mind and soul worked. But when the people he had dinner with left the governor's mansion at about 10:30 or 11:00 pm, I thought Pat was still committed not to intervene.

But what happened after that was that Jerry talked with his father that night. He and Pat talked very late and after that conversation, Pat told Poole to call the warden and stay the execution. I got mad at Poole when I first heard about his doing that. I called the next day and asked "Why?" He said, "I did argue with him, but he was set and had completely reversed himself."

Fry: Was Cecil Poole pro-capital punishment?

Dutton: Yes; but Cecil would say he has reservations. But he had been in the DA's office in San Francisco. He, Pat, and Tom Lynch had prosecuted a number of capital punishment cases. In the governor's office, besides clemency cases and pardons, he was liaison with the law enforcement people, which is a very powerful lobby. Earl Warren always said that during his Sacramento years, it was the most powerful, beyond even the liquor, racetrack, billboard and oil industry. What I'm saying is: Cecil's whole background was law enforcement. He was in that role in the Chessman case; but he also had his sincere doubts, as we all have our real doubts about it.

Pat's administration had rallied and made an all-out fight to try to get the state legislature, beginning with the senate, to change the law. We lost quickly and decisively. Meantime, after Pat's Chessman stay, a world-wide public storm broke over Pat both

Dutton: for staying the execution, and for not saving Chessman without going back to the legislature and thus leaving him in jeopardy. Later, for complying with the state constitution and letting the execution occur after state and U.S. Supreme Court appeals were more than exhausted, liberals thought that Pat should refuse to enforce the constitutional mandate. But how does a governor refuse to enforce such a provision? How does he decide which parts of the constitution or other laws he will enforce and which he will say he is above? If a governor or president decides he's above the constitution, you're at the end of the whole system. In any political study, the Chessman stay needs to be seen as the watershed between Pat building major historical power to get things done in California and then that steadily ebbing, even though he rallied just enough to defeat Nixon in 1962.

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Dutton: Going to the state legislature in 1960 to try to repeal capital punishment was a hopeless political exercise. Yet instead of saying, "I refuse to enforce the constitution," or "I'm above the constitution," Pat did that. But it was temporizing at best.

Fry: Do you mean you didn't really think that it would ever--

Dutton: Well, Pat said he thought the legislature might repeal the death sentence. Pat's an endless optimist. I never thought there was a chance in a hundred million. Why? Because we had fought that battle 'all-out' twice. Two, we had given away major things in that fight. He had given appointments. We'd conspired with key legislators, newsmen and outsiders with impressive influence, even churchmen, to get enough votes to end capital punishment--and still lost decisively twice. We'd conspired with pressure groups--unions, liberal, women, Catholic priests, various business groups, the education lobby, individuals with law enforcement backgrounds, bits of the media, psychiatric experts, and others. We'd trotted them all up to Sacramento, trying to get that damn thing repealed and had broken our pick on it.

This says more about myself than Pat, but it applies to the office. I always said to Pat that I thought capital punishment was wrong and life and death, God knows, are central. But I used to say, "Pat, how much of our political credit are we going to put on capital punishment, instead of using this same influence to try to do things for education or the mental hospitals?" What is your human trade-off? These are the ultimate questions of government and politics that few people ever face up to. In a very different context, I had argued with Pat over our priorities between the state water plan and other needs. "Pat, we're going to drown the state in water. How much of the tax revenues, how much of your political clout do we use up on this? Don't we have a responsibility to save state funds and credits more fully for hospitals, prisons, human social services?"

Dutton: But all through Pat's adult life, out of his law enforcement work and Catholicism and personal side, capital punishment loomed in the background as the ultimate moral issue, more important, if activated, than all others. He comes together on this one.

Fry: Do you think this may be Jerry's nemesis too?

Dutton: I don't know. But to go back to Chessman and the question of whether Jerry had any influence on Pat. The answer is no, to the best of my knowledge, with the exception of the first delay of the Chessman execution, and he was all-influential. Let's say he got Pat to do what Pat wanted to do anyway. But Pat, as far as I and I think anybody else could tell, had not been willing to go to that conclusion just by himself, until he and Jerry got together on it.

Then, of course, we went through the fight, broke our pick, never came close, really went all out. The papers clobbered Pat as weak, indecisive, yes-and-no. To Pat, it was all a price worth paying. But he had the worst of all worlds: Chessman got executed. It's not just that we failed, which is not important. But we prolonged the human agony for both the general society and Chessman.

Fry: Could Pat have continued postponing the date of execution?

Dutton: No! Not and retain legitimacy, respect, viable support and effectiveness. At some point, questions of impeachment would arise. That's not the way you run a society like California. A governor is responsible to many people, not just one--and many of them have heartbreaking plights and need often desperate ways, too.

Fry: But once he had taken the dramatic stand, wouldn't it have been politically good just to stick to that and keep postponing the date until he was out of office?

Dutton: Not in my judgment. Also, the problem was that at the same time that we were making the fight in the legislature, his lawyers had gone up to the U.S. Supreme Court. After the U.S. Supreme Court decided against him again (there had been previous unsuccessful efforts there), there has been some respect for not just the law but the overwhelming moral consensus. Individuals need not submit to that, but public officials generally must and should.

Fry: Is this what you're telling me now or is this what you were thinking then?

Dutton: We had these arguments then, not just me, but Pat, Hale, Cecil, the newspapers, the public, Bernice, nearly everybody. This could not have been a more thoroughly discussed issue in those terms then. We received hundreds of thousands of wires and letters from all parts of the world during the Chessman showdown.

Dutton: Why did Pat give up finally? When did the person with those convictions, the ethical individual and Roman Catholic in him, give up? I just think finally there were too many individuals and institutions of value and respect and prominence and dignity which all arrayed themselves against Pat Brown. It would not have been Pat Brown, a conscience-stricken man, but Pat Brown, buffoon, if he had dragged it on.

He had to decide at some point if he was going to keep his oath and enforce the state constitution or wasn't. But he had no lawful legitimacy to his position. He had to appeal to natural laws, which is fine for human beings, but governors and presidents don't have that discretion and remain true to their social covenant, which is an ethical demand, too.

Fry: Were you surprised at the overwhelming coverage by the media?

Dutton: The Chessman case had been on and off the front pages of the LA papers for at least eight or nine years. The Hearst papers, which were much more influential then than they are now (the L.A. Examiner was alive then), focused on the Chessman case as a major matter for many years. Not so much in northern California, but for the two-thirds of the state below the Tehachapis, the Chessman case was major drama and law and sex and bloodlust incarnate. It was deep in the psyche of the state.

Fry: It was almost a folk case at that point.

Dutton: Yes, exactly.

Fry: And very symbolic.

Dutton: Chessman had written a book, and he had been popularized. He had an ego that craved publicity for its own sake. It also prolonged his life and fed the forces (law enforcement and public) demanding his execution. We were all terribly bothered in the governor's office--remember that he had not killed anybody. How do you execute someone who had never killed anybody? A criminal repeater, felony convictions, deep damage to his victims, sexual assaults, dangerous to the community. But not a murderer.

There's an aspect to all this and a footnote which is not in the history books. The practice when we went into the governor's office, and that Pat followed, was that wherever we were in the state on the Friday morning of an execution--I remember best a hotel in LA--when the execution was going to take place at 10:00 or 10:30 or whenever it was, a call comes through a few minutes before the set time. It is the assistant warden saying, "Governor, are you there?" It was traditional for a governor to have his clemency secretary or executive assistant on another line, known to the assistant warden, to in effect be a witness.

Dutton: The reason for the call was that the penal officials, going back historically, wanted to make sure a governor didn't sit in Sacramento and say, "I granted clemency to that man at the last moment, and you didn't stay the execution. You killed somebody I was trying to protect," which can be done for political reasons or by mistake.

So the practice had been, since telephones, to call the governor, and in effect the assistant warden talks him through the execution. "The prisoner has been taken out of his cell. The prisoner has been taken into the chamber. The door of the chamber has been locked. The pellet has dropped," meaning it's the point of no return. The governor cannot stop the death.

Pat had been through that gruesome sequence a number of times before the Chessman case. I think that exacerbated his own natural opposition to capital punishment.

Goodie Knight and Warren hated the process, I gather, and Pat particularly did. Pat has far more sensitivities than his outwardness suggests. Anyway, he had been all through that, and I had been on the other phone with him a number of times. That really became an awful experience. The final tragedy in the Chessman case is that when the execution finally took place, Pat was in the governor's office, really in agony over the damn thing, being talked through the sequence by the assistant warden. I was on the other phone in Adrienne Saussett's office, his private secretary, hearing the sequence. Sometimes Cecil Poole had the other phone; and I don't know why I had it in this instance.

Adrienne, on a separate phone, suddenly got a call from a federal judge's office in San Francisco, claiming the judge agreed at the last moment to hear Chessman's attorneys. The call to the governor's office was to try to stop the execution at least temporarily, on technical grounds, and the call came after the lethal pellet had already dropped on Chessman in the execution cell. I have always thought the lawyers in the case were exploiting the time aspect or awfully late in their umpteenth effort; and the judge's call at the very minute of the scheduled, highly publicized step was also puzzling, to understate the matter. The Chessman case was just a horrible thing from many different angles right up through its final culmination. If it was a mess all during the public stage of it, it was a more godawful mess at the very end.

Fry: What would that have done if Harris's call had gotten through five minutes earlier?

Dutton: That would have stopped the execution. It would have delayed it, so long as the courts kept--you see, Harris as a federal judge had suddenly found some basis on which he was willing to grant an order.

Fry: But my point is that that would not have saved Chessman ultimately. It would just have postponed it.

Dutton: As I recall, the stay was to grant a hearing to consider some papers filed with the judge. Yes, it was a delaying procedure.

Fry: So Pat would still have had to deal with it.

Dutton: Ultimately, yes. But you could say that if Pat could have stalled long enough--you'd finally get to the long, almost endlessly delaying process generally prevailing now.

Fry: I thought I might just run through some specific practical questions about this '58 campaign. There was always the question of debate. Should Pat debate Knowland? What did you think about that?

Dutton: In politics you almost never flatly say no, you won't debate. We couldn't say we wouldn't debate, at the same time we really weren't interested. We had a huge potential margin of victory that would have been put at risk.

There was also in the background the psychological problem. Are we just a bunch of state political types? Knowland had long been in the U.S. Senate. What great toga does that place on one?

The way we finally worked it out was to have the two candidates meet a couple of times and say, in effect, that it was a debate. They 'debated,' as we used the rhetoric, for the California Newspaper Publishers' Association meeting, wherever that was that year, and a couple of what were really joint appearances. Did we want to debate? No. Did we think we had to have some joint appearances? No.

Fry: That debate might also have been against Nixon.

Dutton: No major politician in California can really refuse the California Newspaper Publishers' invitation. You could more now than in those days. If they said, "We want both people on the same platform," you didn't have enough bargaining leverage to say no.

So, in effect, we were seeking to find a way to minimize the risk. Why minimize it? We had nothing to gain and everything to lose. We couldn't win by much more than we thought we were going to win by, but we could lose if there was a faux pas. It was sort of a no-win situation, so we were trying to do it in the least way possible.

Bill Knowland and the Big Switch

Fry: Bill Knowland didn't really campaign personally very much in the state. He stayed in Washington a lot.

Dutton: Yes, he was an arrogant man, obtuse, and, it finally turned out, not very smart. Due to his family wealth and Earl Warren's obligation to the father [Joseph R. Knowland]--the father had really been Earl Warren's main sponsor over the years--Warren had to put him in the Senate. As soon as he was in the Senate, the aura of that place and the paucity of Republican talent led to his becoming minority leader. We all invested so many people with titles with more substance than they really do. Knowland was an example of that. And he did everything wrong in the '58 campaign. He didn't come back. He thought that the people of California wanted somebody to appear a big figure in Washington more than they wanted to see him at first hand.

He had a fight with his wife that got out publicly. He had the arrogance of taking on an incumbent governor of his own party who wanted to continue, who had been relatively popular and not that bad.

Fry: Was this Knowland's idea to come back?

Dutton: Yes, it was apparently strictly his idea. He wanted to run for president. Now, since JFK, we think that the Senate is the better launching pad, but in that period the conventional wisdom was the governorship of a major state was a better launching pad. Knowland was trying to position himself for 1960.

Fry: You said he had a fight with his wife. She came out and campaigned for him. Do you mean the fight before that?

Dutton: No, in the middle, if you look in the news clips. Campaigns finally get to be so neurotic that almost anybody can blow their stack! [laughter]

Fry: She also came out with a blast at Goodie Knight.

Dutton: Yes, she had a blast at Goodie Knight. Gleason was Knowland's campaign manager, and she had problems with him, too. I guess she was a bit distraught, under pressure seeing her husband getting clobbered, when they were supposed to be way above Pat.

The lovely irony of it was Pat from south of Market Street in San Francisco overpowering the Knowlands and their wealth, press connections and establishment prestige. Against that background, we were essentially trying to convey the impression to the voters of California that Pat was the candidate of substance and solidness and stability. By September-October that's exactly what had come about from Republican disarray.

Dutton: Critics often said Pat was bland. Yes, well, bland is one way to describe it, but another way was that Pat was a solid, steady person who could be trusted with the state.

Walter Reuther

Fry: What did you do about the three propositions that were so hot on the ballot?

Dutton: We were against the right-to-work proposal.

Fry: Did you have Pat come out for those?

Dutton: He did. That was the price for labor support and money. Pat also opposed the proposal on substantive grounds and in the interest of labor-management peace and the state's economy.

Fry: Then there was a proposition about taxes against parochial schools.

Dutton: My recollection is that we came out against that. But I don't recall.

To go back to the right-to-work proposition, which was sort of the intricacies of politics, we were against right-to-work, union busting. But at the same time, we didn't want Reuther or other major outside labor leaders coming into the state then. We were trying to establish that we were not a patsy to the union bosses and California should decide the issue without outsiders intruding.

Fry: Reuther was a big help in your campaign, though.

Dutton: Oh, the UAW was very active. He was a fine man. He gave money. But Pat publicly chided him on something. It was an opportunity to prove that we were not--

Fry: That you were independent.

Dutton: Yes, that we were independent, which is what you had to do in California.

Nixon's Stance in 1958

Fry: How did you perceive Nixon at this time? He was then vice president.

Dutton: He endorsed Knowland. He didn't do that much. He was playing the classic political game of being a loyal party guy, but he was better off if Knowland and Goodie Knight got chewed up and went down to

Dutton: defeat. First, he tried to solve the fight. Then he tried to keep the Republican party together and helped engineer the switch. Knowland had decided he was going to run for governor, period. He announced it. The Nixons, Knights, and everybody else had to reorient themselves around what Knowland had put on top of the table. Nixon, behind the scenes and through the papers, tried to work out a happy solution for Knight to go to the Senate. That didn't work out.

Goodie said, "No, I don't want to go to Washington. I like California. I'm governor. I want to be governor. You're not going to push me."

After that, Nixon kept trying to tidy up the party, protect his base for 1960, while still not objecting to Bill Knowland, who was not his friend, going down the tubes. Nixon got rid of Knowland but he didn't engineer or contrive it. So Nixon was protesting his party loyalty and making personal endorsements while he was really not moving that many chess pieces around to try to help on it. Nixon was in a position as vice president--we were way ahead. He couldn't really put his hand in effectively. He wasn't going to get his hand chewed up since he wanted to run in 1960 and he did not want to be too closely identified with what was going to be a bloody loss.

Fry: During all of the shuffling of who would run as the Republican candidate for Senate and who would run for governor, George Christopher came in there too for a while. How good was your communication system? How did you know who was doing what in the Republican camp?

Dutton: Oh, it was not difficult. People in politics are generally blabbermouths even while feigning secretiveness. Pat had known George Christopher from San Francisco politics when George was on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and Pat was DA. They had known each other in the San Francisco community for many years. More than that, we had a number of Republicans with us trying to keep their 'in' and provide a little intelligence.

Fry: I have a note down here that in Los Angeles, Republicans for Brown was headed by Charles Loring.

Dutton: Yes, he did. That's a name out of the past. We had a very active Republican operation. But when they come out for a candidate of the opposite party, they tend to lose their own base to some extent. Those committees--like Loring's was a perfectly good one--but their effectiveness and their actual work is much less than their symbolic usefulness to convince the general public that a candidate has broad acceptance and that the state will be a happy place.

Fry: Did polls influence any of your decisions?

Dutton: Not very much. In '57 the United Steelworkers agreed to buy a poll, our first really big major poll of that period, and the biggest Pat had ever done. As I recall it, it was a \$20,000 poll, which even today is a pretty expensive poll, and was much more so in those days. A guy by the name of Joe Miller, who was on the staff of Senator [Warren Grant] Magnuson then and has been in political PR since--I think he's back in the state of Washington now--arranged it for us. Pat was also a long-time friend of the national head of the Steelworkers then, Dave McDonald. We used Lou Harris of the Harris Poll--he was and is one of the best.

It was helpful. It told us basically what we already thought. But polls in politics tend to be reinforcing more often than newly insightful. But there were a few things about the poll which we thought were not entirely true. You have to be skeptical about polls. But there are some politicians who live and die by them.

Importance of a Central Campaign Strategy

Dutton: The basic memo, which maybe Pat's already told you, for our campaign is one I gave him, about a four or six page memo I typed in San Mateo in '57 that we never varied from. We knew what we wanted to do, and we stayed with it. The memo outlined two or three key personal qualities of Pat Brown that should be emphasized, some substantive points, what we were going to do with the relationship with the Democratic party leaders, the liberal activists and others, what our priorities and goals should be. The budget was handled separate and a little later. I was essentially both reading Pat Brown and the situation, the polls, and the subsequent likely maneuvers.

I think one of the strongest points one could make about the '58 campaign was that we had a very early, simple game plan, and we stuck to it. And events broke right for us. The easiest thing in the world is to suddenly opportunistically try and take advantage of something that happens, which you try to do to some extent, or to get pushed into a different position by various pressures. We knew what we wanted to do, and we were never budged from it. That has a cumulative effect which is terribly important. The impact one can have by taking advantage of a changing situation has some use, but don't take too much advantage of shifts if it would lose the base of psychological impressions that you've been building on.

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Dutton: To put this another way, I don't think in politics that you can try to contrive to do something different from what the mood is or what the basic personality of your candidate is.

- Dutton: The worst thing in the world for people that work campaigns is to think, "Aha, we're going to try and change really what the candidate thinks or what his personality already is." One is stuck with the flaws and strengths. The question is only how to deal with the material you've got, not either to change or contrive or distort the impressions of it too much.
- Fry: Yes, that would be the safer way.
- Dutton: The alternative is too manipulative. A straight-ahead approach was also best for Pat. Pat used to say, "Fred, I'm the horse, and you're the jockey." The kind of horse Pat is, he gets out and runs. You try to get him to be too cute or too contriving or move around the track too much, and it won't work. Pat is usually a straight-ahead runner.
- Fry: You certainly succeeded in that campaign. I think that's all my questions on it.
- Dutton: We were also lucky. You've got to be lucky in politics, no matter what you do.
- Fry: You have to admit that the Republicans cooperated with you that time!
- Dutton: Oh, they did, yes. To appraise Pat before and after the GOP mess, look at Pat's speech before the state AFL-CIO in September of '57. Then he had come back from Hawaii. He was getting in position, probably, to run. But he was keeping his option to stay as attorney general. This was before the real Republican disarray, before we knew that Knowland was going to get into the picture. The earlier Pat Brown is more in that state AFL-CIO speech of September of '57 than anything else, because after that we were responding to the lucky break. Before that was what he was going to do if we hadn't had that break. It was almost Pat Brown diverging away from just being the consensus attorney general of the state forever, to becoming a party candidate for governor. That probably is as clear a Pat Brown as you'll see without the subsequent overlays. I don't know whether he's got a copy of that.
- Fry: Pat has a collection of his speeches somewhere. Would it be in something like that?
- Dutton: Before I left Sacramento, Meredith and a couple of people put together a file of speeches, campaign memos, things like that. Also, at the end of the campaign, during October of '58, we put together a collection of Pat's speeches. We were doing it for libraries, histories, our egos [chuckles].
- Fry: Was Warren Christopher at all in this part of it, or did he come in after?

Dutton: No, he came in afterwards. Oh, I think he came to one or two campaign meetings, but he was practicing law in Los Angeles. In January, 1959, he came in for sixty days or so to help us. He was not ready to make a long-term commitment to Sacramento.

Howard Ahmanson and the Savings and Loan Industry

Fry: Howard Ahmanson apparently paid Unruh's annual \$10,000 salary to head up the southern California part of the campaign. Is that right?

Dutton: Yes, that goes back to the savings and loan.

Fry: That's the savings and loan man? He was a Republican.

Dutton: Ahmanson's family owns Home Savings, long the biggest in the United States. It's not so big in the Bay Area, but in southern California. He was one of Goodie Knight's closest friends.

Fry: And National American Life Insurance.

Dutton: I don't recall that one at all.

Fry: That was Ahmanson, I think.

Dutton: Those savings and loans spin off. They try to get the insurance premiums on the houses that they give mortgages on.

Had Goodie stayed in the governorship, we would have never gotten a dime of Ahmanson money. That is an example of a hidden benefit of Knowland getting into the race. Partly, Ahmanson hated Knowland for hurting Goodie. As California politics always is, Ahmanson, though Republican, was more attached to Goodie than to the Republican State Central Committee.

Ahmanson obviously had tremendous stake in a friendly administration in Sacramento. Some day somebody like Gene Lee should do a study on the correlation between large political contributions and savings and loan charters from about '45 to the '70s.

Fry: If you can find out who contributed what. Contributions aren't always listed.

Dutton: One of the times that I lost my temper in Sacramento was when I found one of Pat's outercircle of advisors, one intellectual resource, was putting together a group to apply for a savings and loan charter. The group was to include himself and key Democratic legislators.

Dutton: That was the kind of thing that would blow us out of the water. We had an honest administration, we were trying to run it that way, and we didn't want any wrong-doing or even vulnerabilities. They didn't submit the application after I objected, but it was the kind of thing that if some paper had gotten it, you would have had problems. Don't let temptation get too close, because you could get blown out of the water before you even have a chance to say yes or no.

That was the dumbest thing I had seen up to that point. If someone who knew Brown well was in private business and wasn't a Brown appointee wanted to go out and get a bunch of businessmen and seek a savings and loan charter, that's fine. But to try and go and get key Democratic legislators [laughter], it was too much.

Fry: I gather then that also part of the way that the savings and loan power operated was that a lot of people like Ahmanson already had theirs and didn't need anymore, but wanted to keep others from getting more.

Dutton: Yes, politics is less what you do for people than protecting them against new things. This is how the status quo gets reinforced, unfortunately. One can be very honest and principled when not doing anything. [laughter]

Fry: And you're still putting your own interests ahead!

Dutton: This is why the wealth establishment and politically powerful people have such a vested interest in the system. They're not trying to get more normally. They're just trying to keep from having it taken away, or trying to minimize rivals. It's how the social-economic base uses the political status quo, and it's all hidden and generally all quite legal.

Fry: The savings and loan would make an interesting case study of all of that.

My other questions are probably ones that you may not be the person to answer. They are controlling who ran and didn't run and the backstage maneuvering at the CDC primary convention.

Dutton: I was in it to the extent that we had to but still stay out of it.

Fry: Keeping Pat's skirts clean.

Dutton: Not only that, but to try to get A or B named would leave Pat responsible for their financing and positions and campaign to some extent. He needed his resources and independence for his own candidacy. Our position was that people had a right to pick and decide for themselves. Our real purpose was also not to get involved in factionalism. When you say you're for A, then B, C, and D, who want to run, are going to get mad at you. So ours was a 'staying out' kind of influence.

Dutton: Beyond that, from being active in California politics, I don't think anybody controls who runs. Anybody who wants to run can if he or she can get workers and raise some money out of the tremendous diversity of California society and economy. I just don't think there's enough party discipline in California to stop strong self-seekers. I believe in party responsibility and the party system. But I don't think that the party county central committee and state central committee have much clout against tough challengers.

Fry: Yes, but from time to time you can switch a person over, as was done to Mosk at one point. He was switched from wanting to run for something--

Dutton: Yes. But that was a pretty dirty job. I'd rather the tape wouldn't be running when I tell you what I know about that one.

Fry: Or do you want to record it and put it under seal?

Dutton: No, I'd rather just not do it. [tape recorder is turned off] One of the principal ways by which you try to keep people from running is to go to their likely sources of financing and talk to those sources. Just ask them to keep a neutral position, which is always a safe, easy thing for somebody with a lot of money. Another way to do it--

Fry: Is that what happened to Peter Odegard in his bid for the Senate?

Dutton: I don't recall fully enough.

Another even more common way to cut off funding sources is to get out and be the front-runner and get such strength that the other would-be candidate isn't willing to run the risk and make that much of a sacrifice by working against the odds.

A Career Pattern: Running as the Overwhelming Candidate

Dutton: This is essentially the way Pat Brown did statewide: a long, prior build-up to dominate if not pre-empt the Democratic nomination. When Pat ran in San Francisco in the thirties, he got defeated. Then when he was finally elected DA in the forties, he settled into that pattern. He started moving around the state in the latter forties getting ready to run for attorney general statewide, away from home and the family a lot of the time. By the time he ran in 1950 there was nobody in the Democratic party who could really challenge him. Then by the time he got ready to run for governor in 1958, to go back to the Ed Pauley-Ed Carter letter episode, Pat's the only logical one again. He sat out a race in '54 because the time was not propitious and he needed more foundation-laying.

Dutton: Pat always was trying to be the overwhelmingly logical candidate when he moved from one office to another, and nobody was willing to run the odds of challenging him. He was all over the middle of the road and too formidable overall. In a media society with fluid politics and relatively little party influence, as we have now, the extent to which a person can get name recognition and become well-known with a particular quality is highly determinative of what finally is done.

So let's say you're somebody who wants to run for a major office. Either you're somebody with no resources, and you've got to give ten years of your life or more to the necessary build-up, or you're somebody rich and you get yourself a prestigious appointment or other arrangement. Then you switch over to running, as you really have been all the time.

Fry: That's a little bit parallel to Nixon coming to California in '62.

Dutton: Yes.

Fry: It didn't work then.

Dutton: It's very parallel to Ronald Reagan using the Goldwater campaign for president in '64 to get himself into a position of prominence and acceptance and political effectiveness and getting a reputation that he could run on in '66. Only George Christopher was really willing to take him on, Christopher thinking, "Look, I'm a rich independent milk businessman. I can do it." It turned out to be a pathetic exercise.

Development of the Media Event

Fry: In '58 how did Pat handle television?

Dutton: It was much newer then. We had radio and TV spots. A guy by the name of Jim Keene, who was our PR advisor from L.A., oversaw those.

Fry: Television was more important that year than it had been.

Dutton: Much more, yes. It was in '52 in the presidential race it jumped up. In '54 statewide it wasn't very important. In '56 with Stevenson and Eisenhower, television was politically coming into its own.

Fry: Were you able to create events so that Pat got TV coverage free?

Dutton: Yes, although that came along much more with the Kennedy period. We did the usual thing--called on old people's homes, walked through hospitals, and generally sought visually effective settings. But all that comes out of the politics of southern California, not the Bay Area.

Dutton: In '58 I don't think more than a very small percent of the people in northern California used, consciously or unconsciously, television as a means of deciding who they were for. Southern California, great, amorphous place that it is, very early became the principal television political city in the country. In L.A. then and today, politics are more affected by television than in any other city in the United States.

When one goes to San Francisco you try to address the labor halls, ethnic groups, shopping centers, Catholic breakfasts, civic luncheons, the Commonwealth Club, things like that. You tend to do static situations. In southern California, you rarely think about the more stationary situations. You'll do a whole bunch of television events because that's the best way to persuade that huge, mobile television-oriented populace.

Fry: Then they know it's real, if it's on television!

Dutton: In '58 we were still as much interested in getting visuals in a newspaper picture as we were in television. It's interesting how these things move along. We did have spots. They were not really that good. In '58 you could do things like have JFK or other out-of-state prominent people come in and be seen with Pat. That would get you on television. Now you've usually got to be more imaginative.

Speechwriting Strategies

Fry: One of the things that I brought along is a press release written by Dick Tuck. It's a very complicated press release of Pat Brown's position on the Feather River Project and whether PG&E should get the power. It's dated January 16, 1958. I thought, "Good heavens, that is so sophisticated!" Is it typical of what you would send out and of what you used the media for?

Dutton: Yes, absolutely. We would not think of issuing a press release like that today. Why were we doing it then? Primarily, it was lifted from the speech that Pat was giving there.

There were also a couple of other reasons. One, there was always the problem of verifying that Pat was substantive. He was substantive. He gave this kind of speech for years. But the general impression of him when he moved up to run for governor was that he's a nice Irish good guy who's not a heavyweight. If we had gone political with simplifications and been too quotable, we would have been proving exactly what they thought to begin with. We were trying to prove he could run the state, that he wasn't just an AG, that he was broader-gauged.

Dutton: Second, Pat was most comfortable with this kind of a speech. He was both businesslike and pedestrian in lots of his talks. He talks best to substantive issues. He had been giving this kind of a speech for a long time. I would occasionally draft language which was more colorful. Pat was not comfortable with it. He always said, "Fred, that's your language. You hype things up."

Or I would get a little bit strident. I'd want to go on the attack against the others. That wasn't Pat Brown. Pat was not comfortable being negative. So the result was, if you decide you're not going to be simplistic, you're not going to be too colorful, you're not going to go on the attack on the others, you finally come back to a fairly meat-and-potatoes kind of talk.

Fry: That speech sounds more like what you said would belong as a program speech for a governor already in office, but not as a political speech.

Dutton: Oh, I agree with that. I'm trying to recall where this was--at a luncheon meeting in his honor. Can you imagine how this bored the audience?

Fry: Well, it depends on the audience.

Dutton: Yes, but it was a luncheon meeting in Tulare County called by Bob Hayden who was a DA and later was a judge, and he was a rather political person.

Fry: But I guess water and power were awfully important issues in Tulare.

Dutton: They were terribly important but--

Fry: [laughs] It does look boring!

Dutton: There are also other considerations which don't go to substance, but are probably more important. You get to work in the campaign and are moving around. If your candidate is giving two or three speeches a day--Pat hated to give the same speech, which Carter and Nixon and Ford and Kennedy ended up doing much more than Pat would.

Pat wanted a different speech all the time. I used to say, "Pat, we can't turn them out well that fast. We can't do that much." I would sit up until ten or eleven o'clock at night after campaigning during the day, trying to draft a new speech or at least a major new insert. Some of our differences used to be, "Pat, there's nothing wrong with that last speech. Why don't you give it again?"

Fry: He was bored with it, right?

Dutton: He was bored with it. He'd give it twice, and he'd think that everybody in the state knew it. But in any event, to handle that situation you have several speechwriters and resource committees doing water

Dutton: problems and taxation and other issues. They come up with memos and speech drafts. You usually have to rewrite them because they don't sound like the candidate. I'm guessing, but this one, I'll bet you, was written by some resource guy. In fact, I would guess it was probably Ralph Brody, a lawyer who became the governor's expert on water and was on the governor's staff for a while. He later headed an irrigation district in the Central Valley. You always have, out of Berkeley and so forth, a group of resource people. They give you this kind of thing.

Pat, who can be a charming speaker, often would say, "This is my speech," and launch into it as though it were an assignment. Or he'd get up and tell a bunch of jokes and talk. Then about fifteen minutes later he'd say, "Now, my campaign says I've got to read this!" It embarrassed the hell out of me! [laughter] Then afterwards he'd say, "Gee, aren't you glad now we're through with that?" [more laughter] Ah!

Fry: In this speech he takes on PG&E [Pacific Gas and Electric].

Dutton: We used to do that. Pat hates to take on anybody, but PG&E had aligned itself against Pat in the attorney general's office.

Oh, I remember now. There's another interesting thing about this speech. If you couldn't get the L.A. Times (which we couldn't because it was so Republican then), the most important thing you wanted was the McClatchy papers. The McClatchy papers had supported Earl Warren. They liked Goodie Knight. Knowland had done a few things for them in the U.S. Congress. So they were not against him, though they were much more liberal. But if you wanted the Sacramento Bee and the Fresno Bee, and we were all out for that, it was useful to take on PG&E. There was a man by the name of Walter Jones who was then executive editor.

Fry: McClatchy had left that in his will, hadn't he?

Dutton: That is correct. This is a little bit of the religion of California politics. Pat believed in public power. But it was one of those political requirements in the Central Valley, too.

Fry: And Tulare was in the Bee area?

Dutton: You should be for public power; you should be for the state water plan; you should be for the 160-acre limitation--in the McClatchy area. To take on PG&E was not a big deal, because however much they might hurt you was peanuts compared to the benefits from the Bees.

Fry: That might make a very nice case study there for us. I'll run, but I think we can finish this up with just one more not very long session.

##

IV THE CALIFORNIA GUBERNATORIAL CAMPAIGN, 1966

[Interview 3: August 15, 1978]##

A Critique of the Later Brown Administration

Fry: How much were you aware of the 1966 campaign before you were called from Washington to go out to California?

Dutton: Practically nothing, just what I had read in the Washington newspapers. I had very brief occasional conversations by telephone with the governor and Hale Champion. In going to the University of California Board of Regent's meetings eight to ten times a year, I had conversations with Californians about what the situation was. But I had been out of California politics since the fall of 1960. I had not gone back to the '62 campaign because I had become an Assistant U.S. Secretary of State. The only exceptions were a few private early strategy meetings and news that the governor was in trouble. I was preoccupied here in Washington from 1961 on, and it just didn't seem part of my area of immediate activity or responsibility.

Fry: Were you with the State Department?

Dutton: I had left the State Department in the summer of 1964. President Johnson asked me to be executive director of the platform committee for the 1964 Democratic national convention and to take charge of research and planning of the Democratic National Committee for his '64 presidential campaign. By the end of that I was tired of politics. I had been in government, beginning in January, 1957, for over seven years, and I decided to go into private practice of the law, primarily in Washington but to some extent in California.

The governor called me occasionally all through those years, then urgently for the first time three or four weeks before the primary election in June of 1966. He said it was really tough. Yorty in particular was giving him a bad time. He had difficulties.

Dutton: No great mention of Reagan, as I recall. We talked generally, but I don't think that I was particularly to the point or well grounded as to Pat's problems. Then he asked me, could I come out. I said that at the time I was involved in legal work in Wheeling, West Virginia, involving a fairly major steel company management takeover by a Californian, and just was not able to do it on twenty-four hour's notice, and that was the end of the matter.

Then he called next a few days after the primary election and asked if I would come out; things were really in a mess. And I said yes and went out. I was there five or six days, and looked at the situation. He asked me if I wouldn't come out and stay. I said I had legal work in Washington. But I went back to California two or three weeks after that and lived in a motel in Los Angeles and began to take a look at the situation.

Let me make some general, overall remarks about that. [pause] In my opinion, as I looked at it then and since more generally in an historical sense, a governor at the end of eight years has obviously incurred a lot of political wounds. More important in my opinion, the public gets tired. The political mood is fickle at best, and politicians on the way up take that into account better than after they arrive, as Pat had--and more than political scientists and historians writing from outside.

For governors and presidents in particular, a deterioration easily sets in and can have its own growth if not consciously corrected. Pat had not done that. He had gotten governmental instead of political. He had let his administration bureaucratize. His creativeness at the start had gotten stuck in the concrete of rectitude and comfortable arrangements which are not politically regenerative.

Another fundamental consideration in my opinion--and I said this to the governor then and we've kidded about it since--Pat himself had undergone a certain psychological evolution. My overly flip way of putting it had been that when he ran in 1958, even though he had been in office for many years, he was hungry and hustling. He was an Irish boy from south of Market [Street] in San Francisco. By the time he had been in the governor's office about seven years, you'd have thought that Pat Brown had been born to the purple.

He had too many, oh, state troopers wherever he went, too many big black limousines, too many people deferring and calling him governor for too long, etc. My personal reaction when I returned in the summer of '66 was that some of his staff and department heads in Sacramento, as able and as dedicated as they were, had gotten to look on him as a fixture rather than a human being or (necessary though rarely admitted) a politician who had

Dutton: to keep rebuilding his public credit account. There had just been a very considerable and widespread devolution of that kind.

This was very much wearing on Pat. He had come to accept criticism less readily--quite the opposite of the latter fifties. There was even a bit of pompousness, which disappeared quickly after the election again. I think that was a tough period for Pat personally and bears consideration in terms of political fatigue. His administration in Sacramento, in my opinion as an outsider, had gotten to where they were more concerned with running the government rather than dealing with people.

This is a little bit where Hale Champion and I always had a slight if often unstated disagreement. Hale tends to be governmental, and he's excellent at it. He is a superb administrator, a serious and substantive person who does not suffer legislators, reporters (though and ex-one), pressing members of the public, and such with much willingness. I, in contrast, have always tended to be what I would say is more political, in both the good and bad of that term. Pat often said I was also impatient and a perfectionist. But I like the game, the dynamics, the in-fighting and argument and relationships of politics. In '66, I felt that basic priorities--identification with the people and the economy and life of the state--had been lost in preoccupation with running the governmental machinery--and actually most of the executive agencies. I think it was a good administration. I think it was first-quality in terms of administrative ability and program conceptualization. But the point of elective officers is not to be just administrators and policy-makers but also to rally the public, maintain strong support to expand where needed substantively and, in essence, to be political figures. That latter role had very seriously deteriorated.

So, in an overall sense, what you had in my opinion was a political situation in which, regardless of Yorty in the primary or Reagan in the general election, the governor was ripe to be beaten. He was not entirely aware of it. Pat tended to run scared whenever he was up for election. But he thought in '66 that his situation would heal and go together, particularly after--and like--his surprise and admirable defeat of Richard Nixon in '62.

Another consideration really, at a lower level, was that Pat, Hale, and others in Sacramento were tending to look at the problem in '66 as one of immediate personality: Yorty was an SOB, an opportunist. They were going to save California from him. Jesse Unruh was looked on as overly ambitious, avaricious, premature in his desire to move into the governorship, undercutting the governor. A lot of all that was true. But it's all part of the give and take, the play of politics. Unfortunately, they were focusing upon immediate personalities instead of what the real situation was.

Dutton: They were incumbent. They had the state, and the state was bored with Pat. They had sort of lost their immediate sensitivity and hunger towards the public. So it was a ripe situation.

As to my re-entry into the state, I had great qualms about coming back. One, I think when you leave a situation as I had left politically in 1960, you don't go back and you can't go back. I also was looked at as someone who had run his original campaign. He had great confidence in me. I had then been involved in national politics. It was bound to set off suspicions or defensive attitudes in the people who were already there, which is perfectly understandable on their part. I was an outsider. Why was I coming back after they had long run things and taken the clobbering in the primary yet scraped through? Did I think I was going to be the guy on the white horse who would try to take over and rescue the situation?

I tried to compensate for that at the time by no title and a low profile, but it was difficult. The press knew me, and I tend to be critical and to the point in politics. I think criticisms of the situation after the primary results were relevant and appropriate. But there were frictions and problems because of the difficult situation.

I don't think the problems were terrible, at a personality level. Hale had more of a governmental approach; I had more of a political approach. Don Bradley who had long been active in state Democratic politics, operating at the northern end of the state, could reasonably think my return was poaching on his territory also. Hale and I had known each other for eight years. Don and I had known each other for almost ten. But it was not easy. Hale and Don and everybody tried to bridge the thing as much as possible.

Pat saw the latent problems in the situation, but still wanted me to come back. I think we all tried to ease into it. But I would have to say, if one looks at the whole mess of 1966, it never went together. The press and some of the political community were conscious of different approaches, different judgments. It reaffirmed my personal conclusion that you don't go back.

I've also always believed that you have to have a very narrow, tightly-run political operation for offices like governor and president. You should not have factions of advisors or even the appearance of that. By the general election, an implicit consensus of both style and substance should congeal the inner working group into one organism--at least until election day. A major candidate has to settle on this person or that person. Pat really had settled for some time on Hale and Don and a few others and then he was re-introducing me into the already troubled network. I think that in politics there's only disaster on that road.

Fry: If you hadn't gone back, do you think Pat would have had less dissension in his staff and that he could have won?

Dutton: No, I don't think he could have won under any circumstances. Looking from hindsight, I don't think there was anything that could have been done that year. If one looks at the campaign, there are a number of interesting ideas that were proposed: a re-examination stylisticly of the programmatic approach to politics long before that surfaced nationally; a tough if defensive critique of social welfare; re-examination of the whole question of growth in California; trying to look at what we could do about the California economy; the aerospace industry; technological gimmicks like a communication satellite for educational, police and other purposes over California, etc. So I think there was creative ferment in the situation.

It was just a situation which in my opinion was not recoverable. One, because Pat had been in too long. He had what I call, overall, a technical problem in politics.

The personality feuds, to get to that, were rampant anyway: Brown versus Unruh, Yorty versus Pat, Wyman versus Warschaw versus various others, the liberal Democrats and club movement even more factional than usual; a new wave of interest-group politics jockeying in Pat's inner circle with the liberal idealogues on one hand and the governmentally concerned, from another angle of divisiveness. Pat in his first five years had been able to reconcile or paper over those problems; but natural problems within the California society and within the Democratic constituency were beginning to surface before '66.

I would have to say as an outsider coming back at that point (and this happens in all politics), there was also a bit too much preoccupation with the plums of appointments and this and that. One of the remarkable things about Pat's administration was its honesty, or lack of major corruption, which you don't see in state governments or even on the national level, for a full eight-year span. But people got more concerned with appointments and other plums the longer he was in office. And especially their status.

Fry: Oh, you mean in government?

Dutton: Big money was required for American politics and for California politics in particular by 1966. That brought in the rigidities of big fundraising and big fund-raisers. Money has always been crucial in U.S. politics. But it became much more so with the big-time advertising of TV by the sixties. As television came in, computerized politicking, polling, mass mailing, more and more specialists, all kinds of thing, suddenly the need for money became greater.

Dutton: Also, my personal observation has always been that the more a campaign is in trouble, the more the key people in it think that their problems will be solved by fundraising. I can tell if a candidate is going to lose if he spends most, or a great deal, of his time going to fundraising affairs, private dollar-based cocktail parties, and private-contributor dinners. That's a candidate who's in trouble, because, one, the money is not flowing in, so he's having to hustle for it. Two, as he puts time in the campaign fundraising, he's cutting himself off from reaching out to the general public as his primary priority, or he's getting desperate and not pacing himself, not resting enough. In contrast, when the electoral flow is with him, the funds flow in with a lot less effort. I saw in '66 that fundraising had come to dominate the political side of the apparatus too much.

In politics, key constituencies are important. But the Democratic base was splintering its power. If you look within the labor movement, there were all kinds of divisions, more exacerbated in '66 than in '58 or '62. Within the black community there was the same problem. This may be a factor--as a party or movement or group is in power, they splinter more and more. They become tentatively and temporarily cohesive when they're out, to get in. Pat's campaign base had proceeded to the point that few really cared about the Governor in their preoccupation with their own maneuvers.

Fry: What do you mean that nobody cared about it?

Dutton: Everybody was paddling his own canoe in the campaign. I don't think it was unique to this particular group or campaign. The situation is more a case study in what happens in government and corporations and unions, and other human groups when in power for a while. Pat, in my opinion, should probably have gone for some kind of regeneration in '64 or very early '65--new faces, new arrangements, new ideas, new proposals, new style. He didn't do that, and most incumbents do not.

The governors and presidents that I've seen gain power and work like the dickens. Then they relax, or get lost in the complexities, or are exhausted. The demands upon them are great. But our democratic processes do not allow them to indulge themselves relaxed or 'lost.' A constant political and substantive rebuilding must go on to offset the inevitable erosions of time, particular setbacks, new faces coming along, etc. Pat did not take that into account. If one were to go back in an historical sense, I think the fault was as much in late '64, early '65, as it was in the fall of '66, in terms of Pat personally and his key people.

The interesting thing is that Pat over the years--it went back to when he was DA, attorney general, governor--had regenerated with new faces all the time. Bringing me in was an example of that in the

- Dutton: middle of his attorney general period. Hale was an example of that at the outset of his gubernatorial period. Pat had some face changes around him in the sixties, but he did not really regenerate as to his key personalities.
- Fry: Having been rewarded by such good victories before, I think one would tend to keep his formula going.
- Dutton: Well, that's what history doesn't allow you entirely. People who try to keep their formulas going too long get run over. Yorty was not that big a deal as Pat's primary opponent. In fact, he was awful. He had been around California politics since the middle thirties. He had been a very ordinary and often long absent mayor of Los Angeles. He had been considered too far left at the bottom of the depression, then swung transparently way right when that was popular. He was a California Joe McCarthy before McCarthy. He was a pedestrian congressman and a transparently hack politician whose main talent was to always keep running--for whatever was up for grabs. The fact that he threatened Pat with the inroads he made in the '66 primary and with no real issue shows that Pat had serious weakness in his own base of strength.

The problem was essentially in Brown, not in the others. Reagan didn't run that great a campaign. You look at Reagan's campaigning, the divisions within the Republican base then, the quality of his TV commercials, his vulnerabilities. He was not that formidable a guy at the start of his elective career. He was an effective tactical figure, but the main problem was the Brown administration.

- Fry: One thing that came out after the election was that Spencer-Roberts, which was the campaign firm that handled Reagan professionally, said that their surveys put down that the number one issue was Brown's supposed lack of leadership ability. I wonder if you tried to do something to offset that impression?
- Dutton: I don't agree entirely with that. I realize that's what they said of him. That was a latent problem for Pat in '58. Knowland tried to lay that rap on him--too affable, bumbling, nice guy, weak. Nixon tried to lay it on him in '62. It is a perception which is easy because of Pat's style and gregarious personality. It's just that the charge, the tag, stuck in '66; whereas, two other formidable political types (Knowland as Republican leader of the U.S. Senate and Nixon from being vice president and a Senator) had tried to lay it on, but it just wouldn't adhere.

In '66 Spencer and Roberts were riding high. If you win in politics you look great, and if you lose, you look like a bum.

- Fry: You don't think that image was a bothersome thing?

Dutton: Yes, I think the image was bothersome. But the same perception, by the public and the media and other political people as to Pat, was widespread in the press and by word of mouth in '58 and '62, and it didn't take hold. It only took hold when other problems were widespread, and the tag then gains enhanced receptivity.

Another problem with the tag, as far as I'm concerned, is that Pat had a fine legislative record and other accomplishments. Nobody was particularly faulting the integrity, the quality, the direction of the administration in Sacramento. Pat had amply proven leadership. But he had accumulated vulnerabilities and blind spots along the way. And those pre-conditioned the public attitudes toward him. I think that if Pat had asserted himself more, he'd have had more problems. Pat had taxed too much, legislated too much, regulated too much by '66--especially with the conservative public mood nationally that year. Democrats lost in droves in '66 across the country.

Also, there was Pat Brown, the man who seemed to assume he had been born to the purple, as I said, with incumbency and power. He was acting out the charade of power too much.

He would sometimes put his foot in his mouth. But Pat's done that all of his life, and usually he was loved for it. [chuckles] It was only when everything started to fall apart that people tried to say this or that was the reason. That's always an inherent strength and weakness in Pat's style and political situation. It was just that in '66 there were not other things going on to overcome the minuses. That's why I think the Spencer-Roberts critique, while relevant, was not true. It is ironical that Pat had proved by '66 he was a good governor but a lousy politician--the opposite of the public impression.

Thoughts on Power, Politics, and the Social Good

Dutton: If you're going for power and then are to have staying power, you'd better be a good politician before as well as a good governor. If an individual is potentially a good governor, that's not enough; he should be in the priesthood or a teacher or a social worker. Politics requires marshalling support, votes, and the other indicia of power in a popularly-elected governing process. And a leader must keep doing that, not largely become governmental once in office. The process is continuing. Pat let that slip aside, or well-down, in his priorities in the mid-sixties. Which is an amazing thing to say about Pat Brown.

Fry: It is, because he seems to be so warm towards people. But I guess it's very easy to lose your sense of maintaining contact.

Dutton: It is easy for a Democratic, or liberal governor like Pat, sitting in Sacramento, to think the state is made up of supplicants, bureaucrats, adulators and then, beyond, mostly the poor or Chicano or black or migratory field workers or in mental institutions or prisons, things like that. Those people are all there. From our value approach, they have to have a tremendous amount of your time. But you can't just think about them. There are truck drivers, shopkeepers, professional people, a full range of society.

One of the perceptions of Pat that the polls showed in '65-'66 was he was mostly concerned with a certain spectrum. Part of Pat's Catholicism, which has to do with charity, came out very strongly in his work and priorities. It explains much of his opposition to capital punishment. In a sense, by '66, Pat had given way, I think, to certain admirable but not sufficiently disciplined, even 'politic' traits of his own personality for him to maintain the allegiance of the full, real spectrum of the California populace.

Perhaps he no longer had the driving ambition which tends to be in tension and to discipline the overall leader. Some of the good instincts, the kinder, more generous instincts overwhelmed the caution and balance of the earlier Pat Brown. That's a reality, if fault, of the elective process. It was only when the various aspects of Pat's own personal side were in tension that he was really winning elections.

I'm a strong supporter, and always have been, of Cesar Chavez. But if you're going to identify with Cesar, which I think is good, then a Democratic governor had better also be identifying with the state AFL-CIO, other groups of workers, small business needs and other things as well. Pat had tended to let himself be perceived as more concerned with minorities than majorities. Admirable, but not good for minorities keeping their kind of governor in power come the next statewide election.

A lot of the problem wasn't of Pat's own making. The march on Sacramento by Cesar and the migratory workers--they were trying to increase their relative power compared to other groups, all legitimate. Pat had not handled it too well. At first he had resisted it; then in reaction he gave in too much as perceived by much of the state. There was a certain bungling, let's say, of the migratory workers' march on Sacramento. I think some of the perceptions of Pat as not being a leader, weak, and the victim of events flowed in immediate terms out of that and the handling of the Berkeley student situation, the Watts troubles, and similar events. All reinforced a general impression, in a period of increasing conservatism, of Pat overshiftintg to the liberal side and at the same time both vacillating

Dutton: at times and seeming to be too much a politician. Standing clearly for one's principles and at the same time being politic, educating people, choosing the effective ways and acceptable symbols ("new wine in old bottles," in FDR's phrase) is the challenge of leadership.

A lot of people thought that Pat was too oriented toward the black community. Civil rights was very much in the upswing then at the same time as, and in part fueling, widespread conservatism as well as pockets of outright racism.

If you step up to 'Watts,' and you step up to 'Cesar,' and the 'Berkeley students,' and lots else, then you must voluntarily of your own initiative as a major public figure step up to show concern as well for the bread-and-butter concerns of other major groups, whose interests must be recognized by a governor in order for him to do effective things over the long run on social issues, much less get re-elected.

Unrest at Berkeley

Fry: I think it was Totten Anderson and Gene Lee who wrote that the long-hairs, the young, anti-Vietnam oriented kids were a new underdog appearing at this time, which may have been overlooked by and was unexpected actually to Democrats.* The Free Speech Movement at Berkeley was the center of this.

Dutton: If in '66 there was a buzz word, to use a current expression, it was Berkeley. Berkeley, in our polls, was the most negative word you could mention. The student ferment was then 'hyped' by the Vietnam situation.

The FSM movement really had its own complete origins out of swollen enrollments beginning in the fifties and, I think, ensuing administrative incompetence at Berkeley--long enrollment lines; the introduction of computer cards that depersonalized young people at an acute time in their forming of identity; housing problems at Berkeley; and a lot more flowing from the swirl of enrollments of the early sixties which the administrative apparatus could not respond to quickly enough, for budgetary, personnel and conceptual reasons.

*Western Political Quarterly, March 1967.

Dutton: In that, too, Pat was being driven from pillar to post. People always suspected Pat or a given other public figure as weak, vacillating, too political, doesn't know what he really wants. But he was having to reconcile new developments in a fast-changing state with old arrangements and attitudes--and take the blame for people and institutions over whom he had no or minimal direction.

Fry: And he had been the one, I guess, who got all the credit or blame for pushing the button for bringing the state police to remove the students from Sproul Hall in the nation's first sit-in.

Dutton: That's correct.

Fry: On the other hand, Reagan seemed to be able to make more out of that than Pat Brown.

Dutton: Yes. Part of that situation, I think, was that the person who had the responsibility--Pat--had to see the problem more in grays than his outside political critics. Pat had the grays, and Reagan had the black and whites. But part of the problem also was Pat's own personality trait of appearing to consult everybody, delaying and thus, sometimes unfairly, seemingly weak and vacillating. First on Berkeley for example, he didn't want to do anything. He had certain sympathies, and he respected the university and got along well with President Clark Kerr. Then, when he was politically getting eaten up alive, particularly by the San Francisco Examiner and the more sensationalist media, he precipitously reacted the other way, really losing both groups to a certain extent. The timing of decisions, the even-handedness and firmness in taking hold is difficult--and essential at the same time. It's part of the art of politics and government, and nobody does it terribly well over the long run of incumbency.

I do think that, to keep an historical perspective on this, Pat had the first sit-in at Sproul Hall. He had the first major black riot, with Watts. It's usual that California is a window on the future. California usually dramatizes trends and psychological dynamics at work in the whole country, but California always does it in sort of a--

Fry: Ad hoc? [laughs]

Dutton: Ad hoc, super hyped-up way.

Brown's Response to the Vietnam War

Dutton: Those events were all coming to bear on Pat between '62 and '66, and I think that needs to be kept in mind. The problems of politicians and governors is that excuses don't help much. You can't say, "Oh,

Dutton: my God, I was at an historical crossroads or watershed and look at the problems I had!" He wanted the hot seat; he got the hot seat. He's essentially wrestling with events, and the events of '62 to '66 were pretty tumultuous.

Vietnam was stepping up. Johnson bombed and stepped up the invasion in '65 and early '66. He became a politically unpopular man. One of the last-minute problems in the '66 campaign in California was, Did we want Johnson in when he came back from his tour of the Pacific in October of '66? Even the world was coming to bear on Pat and California in a highly dramatized, traumatic way that autumn.

Pat had formidable problems, but here again an essential point of politics is that you must always keep putting enough credits and standing and respect in your political bank account to draw on to handle problems and still have some credit left. You need to get public support and do 'popular' things all the time in order to be able to draw upon your popularity to help solve or improve unpopular problems--to do things for poor people, minority elements and the rest of the disadvantaged of society. Helping them doesn't automatically give political standing or power with the electoral majority.

And beyond that, you must also have a certain margin, in the political bank account, as I put it, in order to handle unusual events. Pat wasn't doing that, in my opinion, in '64, '65--early '66. He was running a good, colorless, increasingly beleaguered administration in Sacramento.

Fry: Ed Salzman wrote a column on August 20, 1966 in the Oakland Tribune, commenting on Pat and welfare. The general gist of this article is that Pat Brown was trying to become more conservative. One of the things that Salzman points out was that--let me quote. "Brown's state managers became convinced that Brown must lose his image as a friend of the welfare recipient and donor of large quantities of the taxpayers' money to the indigent. So they decided to have Brown dramatically dump state welfare director John M. Wedemeyer, a symbol of California's free-spending welfare system. Suddenly and viciously, the Brown of 1966 turned on his own faithful appointee and forced him to resign." It goes on to say that "the governor is getting plenty of mail applauding him for a welfare crackdown."

Dutton: That rings bells, but I had no personal involvement or participation. I guess my reaction to it is, one, Pat probably did it too precipitously. What we're talking about, in part, is the effectiveness and style of the situation; welfare is always unpopular or has been for a long, long time and was increasingly so in that period, as it is today. There are political years like that; decent governors can't run out on the poor. And Pat didn't. But changing administrators and symbols may be needed to lessen public pressure for reducing benefits. Principled rigidity can do as much damage as vacillation and weakness in coping with major public reaction.

Dutton: I don't recall Wedemeyer or what were the immediate problems, whether they had any exposés or whether he had become unacceptable in the legislature. All I'm suggesting is that Brown, going into the '66 campaign in an increasingly reactionary climate, as that period was, had to be expected to cope, not to necessarily turn cooperative. Politics and leading a society are a multidimensional chess game. You don't have to swing on just a left-right spectrum which is an analytical concept partially helpful, partially misleading and not reality.

Another problem which you have though, let me suggest, is that Pat was behind the count on the widespread reaction (especially within the Democratic base) to the Vietnam War, to Lyndon Johnson, to the troubles of the Democrats in power nationally, to the mounting dissatisfaction with the liberal overlay. Pat should have been moving on his accumulating vulnerabilities in '64 and '65. Pat began to really try to adapt in March and April of '66. At a minimum that was six months to a year too late. Suddenly they're too obvious and acute to be able to handle adeptly.

Fry: How did he try to adapt to the Vietnam War? At this time the polls show that most people overwhelmingly favored the conduct of the war, except they would like to have more bombs dropped.

Dutton: Well, yes and no. That was part of the problem of Democratic politics in that period. Within the Democratic constituency it included almost all the people who were against the war.

This brings up another problem which Pat had in '66 and which we discussed many times then. Pat always had the problem, and it was aggravated in '66, he wanted everybody to love him. He wanted 80 to 90 percent acceptance, if not support. You can't get that and be effective as governor. You've got to decide, "I want this 60 percent or this 55 percent or this 51 percent." If you would just look at the 55 percent that he should have been going for, probably a majority of that was against Vietnam by the fall of 1966, especially in the student generation and club movement.

As I recall it, Pat finally tried to handle the Vietnam issue in '66 by saying it was a national problem, that it was Lyndon Johnson's, that he, Pat, was running on state problems and accomplishments. But it still came to bear in the public's psychology. In the campaign, it came to bear in the question did they want Lyndon Johnson to come into the state or not.

Fry: Did they?

Dutton: Well, there were arguments about that. There were a lot of people who thought, "Oh, a president always helps." This all crystallized when Johnson went to the Pacific and then had to come back through

Dutton: California. The big argument within the campaign staff--some people said, "You can't say no. You've got to accept him. Lyndon Johnson will get mad and blast you publicly, or he'll cut off funds for you, or he can hurt you." There were some who were saying that it would be better to keep him away. I happened to have been in that group.

One way we tried to handle it was that Bob Kennedy came out and barnstormed the state. Bob was very popular. He was not as divisive then as at other times in the view of some of the public. His approach especially tended to handle a constituency which was anti-Johnson, anti-war.

Fry: But Johnson never came.

Dutton: No, Johnson finally made the decision not to come. As I recall, he was in Hawaii on his way back from the Pacific. He was getting these reports that California and other states didn't want him. He was beginning to see his own popularity problems. As I recall, he finally flew from Hawaii direct to Texas. He may have stopped at a remote airbase, but I'm not sure he did. Anyway, he went down to the ranch and pouted for the last five or six days before the election, which solved that problem.

But within Brown's own campaign it was a big subject of discussion back and forth. In Pat's interviews, if you look at the press, his comments, I believe, were, "Lyndon Johnson is my president. He's a fine man. But I've got to run for myself." He was trying to go two ways at once. Some people said, "That's contradictory and wrong." But I think it was the only solution.

Fry: Is that how you advised him at the time, or did you think he should come out more strongly against Vietnam?

Dutton: No, I did not. I thought that was a problem where he should say that he was running for governor and that was a national problem.

Fry: What were Pat's own feelings about Vietnam then?

Dutton: I don't recall. We had discussions. I just don't recall at this time.

Fry: What were your feelings?

Dutton: Oh, I have a contradictory background on that. When I was assistant Secretary of State for congressional relations I handled some of the early briefings and went up with Dean Rusk to congressional briefings plus several times with Maxwell Taylor and Robert McNamara for executive sessions of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. I had been initially uncritical.

Dutton: But then I was in charge of research, planning, and the speech-writing group put together for the '64 presidential campaign and was involved in early discussions on speeches Fulbright, LBJ, and others gave. If you look at those and the '64 Democratic literature, the emphasis was strongly peace-oriented. I worked some with Dick Goodwin on what is called LBJ's "Manchester, New Hampshire speech," which was really the key one that put Johnson on record for peace. What we didn't know at the time was that Mac [McGeorge] Bundy and NSC people at the White House were, by early to mid-October of '64, already talking about escalating American troop strength over there. That was Johnson working with two different sets of operators, his campaign people and his national security people, on absolutely contradictory tracks.

By early '65, realizing public developments, I turned sharply against against the violation of LBJ's ostensible election mandate for arms control and a general peace effort.

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Dutton: I began to step up the pressure with Fulbright, in effect really trying to implement and follow through on President Kennedy's American University speech of September, '63, but didn't break with the administration publicly until late spring of '65. I was getting involved in resuming my law practice. The first really strong feelings, I think where I psychologically broke with Johnson on Vietnam, I recall quite well. I was in the kitchen of my house in Washington in March or April of '65 when the first bombing was reported. I was conscious that was way too much. I was increasingly against the war involvement after that, but I was not militant. I became pretty vociferous by the fall of '66. From then on, as you know, I finally ended up running Bob Kennedy's campaign and was an organizer on the platform fight at the 1968 Democratic national convention. At the national convention in Chicago in '68, I was very active trying to fight Johnson. So I went full circle, which Johnson realized. He was not happy with me. [laughs]

In terms of Pat in '66, I think that some of us all were beginning to feel very strongly about the war. But Pat's campaign for re-election just wasn't the right ball park in which to fight that fight, in my opinion. If one was going to say that he was going to fight the Vietnam issue there, it could be at the cost of school support, mental institution funds, welfare, and much more. Values, interests and problems have complex rivalries in a political context, and in a campaign in particular. You've got to decide which is more important in this immediate setting.

He and I had many discussions on those trade-offs. He sometimes thought I was too ready to look at those interactions and argue for a choice. Thus, in the Chessman case. I'm against capital punish-

Dutton: ment, but my argument with Pat was that if he put all of his political clout on that issue, if he put all his popularity and legislative support on that, he would lose and have less muscle to get school funds, to do anything about the blacks and poor areas of the state and things like that. Major political figures cannot indulge themselves in one major issue without relating it to other (publicly) emotional and consequential issues.

If it is a case of an academic specialist, or someone in the clergy, or the conscience of a private citizen, one can indulge in somewhat tunnel vision. Narrow-focus vision is more sensitive, intense, pure, ethical, and humane. But in the political area, as in life, where all things relate and power is like a plumbing system, everything interconnects. What is done in one area of an hydraulic system affects all the other areas, and one has got to keep that in mind all the time.

Dissension in the Democratic Party

Fry: What was happening within the campaign structure?

Dutton: When I first came back from Washington as an earlier confidante of Pat's, I said I didn't want a title and never did take one. I was insistent on that myself. It eased things. But the truth of the matter is, it really did not solve the problem. Some of the papers did speculative stories of personal rivalries among Hale, Bradley and me. Actually, we all got along fine on a personal level. We saw each other and, I think, respected each other's talents and capabilities. But we did disagree in an underlying judgmental sense, and people of good will can disagree on a political or other approach. I think I and they gave quite a bit of ground in terms of accommodating. I thought there should be less emphasis on accomplishments when the public was already so critical, and more on new proposals. Also, on more populist and private-sector measures and less on governmental solutions. More inclusiveness with other political figures and less primacy for Pat's inner group.

Another aspect of this that we have not talked about--which is not a big deal, but to fill out the political mechanics of the situation--besides those personalities, there was Gene Wyman raising money, a major power figure in his own right. Then there was Unruh licking his chops and wounds and being elliptically negative. I think he's a brilliant guy, but brought himself down by too much pettiness and raw power operating in the sixties, before he calmed down--in the seventies. He was another power center here. Carmen Warschaw was trying to create her own, not a big deal. She had no constituency, no real programs, but she had drive, financial

Dutton: independence, and contacts. She was a dramatic personality, and she was drawing media interest, having an effect on public attitudes about the Democratic leadership. And there were a number of others.

Within the campaign context, there was also Harry Lerner. He was a public relations man, but that time retired and living in Palm Springs. He had known Pat back to the early or mid-forties in San Francisco and had been one of his advisors for years. He had had several notable ballot proposition successes statewide. In the most noted one, he had run the campaign for the independent oil companies against the oil majors, the multi-millionaires versus the billionaires. That was on the ballot in '60, and Harry made a lot of money out of that, then semi-retired.

Pat always tended to turn to Harry when he got in trouble. Harry is what we call in politics a "carver." He's primarily a believer in a highly-simplified, essentially-negative campaign: find one or two things to rip apart.

He and an assistant by the name of Dick Kline, who had been a reporter with the L.A. Examiner and then had gone to Sacramento on the governor's staff. Kline later came back and worked in Washington for Senator Scoop Jackson, among others, for a while. Anyway, Lerner and Kline were assigned full-time to run a negative campaign against Reagan--oversimplified investigative reporting, we call it now. At that stage it was: get all the background material you can, even if you don't use it, just so you know, or it has its own neutralizing effect. They were working the L.A. headquarters, independent of everyone, letting others know what they were doing, operating directly with Pat, preparing statements taking on Reagan, the movie star, the ultra-conservative, or this or that, running a tough, head-on campaign. That again was somewhat of a separate power center in the campaign.

Fry: Pat didn't do much to coordinate what they were doing with what you and Champion and Bradley were doing?

Dutton: Yes, that's correct. When I went back to California for the campaign, I did not have direct operational responsibilities. I thought that was the only way to handle the situation. I didn't take a title, didn't have what you'd call a "line job." This was by choice. I tried to have some effect on overall strategy. I tried to bring some critiques to bear and follow through on them. I tried to stimulate fresh material and ideas.

A fourth function was reaching out to people that Pat, Hale or others were warring with politically, specifically--as examples--Unruh and Carmen Warschaw. I had not been terribly close to either one of them in the past, and certainly not for a half decade or more;

Dutton: but I thought that one thing that I could do was to try to lessen the Bradley-Champion-Wyman hostility vis-a-vis Warschaw, Unruh, some of the union figures and others, and see if I could make them feel they could work more with Brown's operation, at least until November.

Fry: Tell me about that. What did you do?

Dutton: Be in touch with, communicate, try to see that they and the Governor got together; try in discussions with Hale and Bradley and others to see that some part of Warschaw's or Unruh's concerns or interests or wants were represented, which obviously would aggravate the internal problems. But if the '66 campaign, or any political campaign, is trying to bring the disparate elements of the Democratic part of the political spectrum together or to bear on a cohesive, effective effort, the other people's views have to be taken into account. They didn't like or trust Hale too much at that time, as a consequence of long years of internecine war in Sacramento over legislation, budgets, appointments, media jockeying, and other matters. I thought, coming from the East, having known them previously, I could talk and work with them, be a bridge, articulate their viewpoint, argue their position to some extent.

Fry: I was reading a newspaper clipping which sounded like Warschaw came out for Reagan almost, saying she agreed with almost everything he said and she thought he would be a good guy.

Dutton: She finally came back to Pat. There was a lot of early and some later ambivalence among Democratic figures about really working for Pat in the '66 campaign. How much some of the really wanted Pat to win is a good question. I think in their hearts they did. But their behavior was highly contradictory.

I'd have to say that's unfortunately chronic in California politics--and all politics. It reflects not just conflicting egos and ambitions but the pluralism of interests and attitudes in our society. In a sense, all California politicians are individualists, not partisans. Look at Hiram Johnson, Earl Warren, and Pat Brown. There is also no party discipline. There are not a lot of appointments and other rewards to hand out. The media is influential and negates party influences. It also over-dramatizes the different viewpoints.

Fry: Right, and that makes it a very important thing in the campaign.

Dutton: Exactly. The cynical reaction to, let's say, the interview with Warschaw that you're talking about is that the press flourishes on conflict, exaggerating, provoking, carrying tales and rumors, pandering to political egos for a story. The constant problem in

Dutton: California and other politics is that all these people are operating at different political levels and not just statewide or with relation to the governor. The Warschaws, for instance, were interested in Ernie Debs, who was then on the county board of supervisors in L.A. I don't want to single them out. I'm only using them as illustrative of the different axes to be ground. You could talk about almost any personality you want in these terms.

L.A. County DA's Office and the Movie Industry

Dutton: Political analysis, particularly in academia (let's say, the University of California) so often tends to look at these things as what is Personality A doing in relation to Pat Brown in the governor's race. They completely lose sight of the fact that Personality A is at the same time in local politics, which has little or no connection or may go in the opposite direction.

A classic example, and one which lacks adequate study, concerns one of the major industries in southern California, the movie industry. It long had need to have good relations with the DA's office in L.A. County to protect the movie stars who get involved in scandal, publicity. The movie industry invests a million dollars developing a star personality, and it doesn't want to have that go down the drain because the person was caught drunk with a young woman on the Hollywood Freeway. Over the years key Democratic figures have been very liberal statewide but very industry-related on local matters, like this doing the crassest things to make sure that the movie hierarchy kept the DA's office.

The Democratic figures sometimes had to play a Republican swing of the cycle, like when Evelle Younger, a nominal nonpartisan in the local office, was there and getting ready to go statewide as a Republican.

Fry: Did Pat have to do that?

Dutton: Pat never had to do that, but he had to get along with personalities who were interested in that. Another kind of state/local split by key Democrats flowed from zoning concerns. Especially in L.A. in the last twenty years and more, the politics of zoning had a great deal to do with what was really going on among some prominent figures. Historians at Berkeley tend to focus on "What are they doing in Sacramento?" But often that's so incidental to the real political maneuvering going on.

Pat in '66 had to cope with prima donnas who beat their breasts in public over their liberal convictions but were primarily concerned with other matters. The truth of the matter is that liberal and conservative breast-beating are often a facade, while they're really involved in a pretty crummy game of other politics.

Dutton: An important part of the splintering in southern California politics has to do with giving an appearance on a statewide level, while they've got other axes to grind at the local or national level.

Fry: Are there any who are in the Pat Brown period?

Dutton: Yes, and some are still active and were active before Pat.

Fry: They are mainly in southern California?

Dutton: Yes.

Fry: That should be a question then that we should always ask.

Dutton: The Bay Area and northern California politics have comparable dynamics but not as intense. There's nothing really similar to the dynamics of Los Angeles County. [laughs]

When a campaign starts to lose, as Pat in 1966, everything tends to come apart. All the vulnerabilities, all the scotch-taping in the past, all the fragile points of tension, suddenly get overstrained. One of the more interesting reasons for studying this campaign is that it's a case study for the latent forces which tend to get out in the open under the pressures of adversity and getting ready for the next political phase.

Fry: I want to read you another quote here. This story appeared in several newspapers at the time, but this particular article is from the S.F. Examiner, August 19, [1966]. This was when the Democrats were holding their state party meeting. Reagan was high on the polls. The story went that Pat Brown called Bradley and Dutton and Champion to Los Angeles to patch up their differences. You canceled a trip to D.C. to do this, and there had been "a near fist fight Saturday in Sacramento at the Democratic state convention in the campaign offices at the capitol."

Dutton: Absolutely untrue. Hale, Don, and I had differences of emphasis and approach at a rational level, and always cool discussion of them. There was nothing beyond that.

At that meeting where Carmen Warschaw was running for state chairman, there were ridiculous emotions and personal attacks--but that was intra-party among people involved in that party-office election. Carmen was contributing her share to the rancor. I was trying to coax Carmen back into Pat's campaign and did keep in contact with her. Hale and Don meantime were bent on beating me for their own reasons, out of the prior several years and party control prospectively. I had no interest in that or anything except the immediate campaign.

Dutton: Don, Hale and I were not in conflict. But we were taking different party contradictory courses which the Examiner story tried to distort.

Fry: On the Reagan campaign?

Dutton: Actually, Reagan in that period was not nearly as much of a problem as the warring factions within the Democratic camp, which is usual. Within the campaign itself, we were all under great constraint to make the thing go, to keep from rocking the boat with all the problems that already existed.

In fairness to the press, if I were a journalist or had written that story, I would defend it in these terms--and I've heard of people who do it this way--"Okay, so it wasn't really there, but I as a journalist was writing the real story. For if I had x-ray eyes and could look into the real tensions or people's psyche, different approaches and disagreements were the real story."

I can't entirely fault that. It's like poetry or Eugene O'Neill plays. They get at the reality of the human being, even though the immediate characters we see are more grotesque. A story like that, I think, is indulging in hyperbole. It's fiction in an immediate sense, but partially true in an underlying sense. In any event, that weekend, that situation, merely contributed to the defensiveness, the bungling, the inability of the Brown campaign effort to get it all together and the Democrats to appear to the public as cohesive and effective as a team.

Dutton's Decision to Join the Campaign

Dutton: Publicity like the Examiner story made me less satisfied about going back to help that autumn. In the end, however, no great lumps. I came back to Washington, wrote my first book on politics mostly in '67, though it didn't come out for a couple of years. I went on and ran Bob Kennedy's personal, travelling campaign in the spring of '68 and experienced one of the most intense political endeavors of modern U.S. history. There was no lasting effect from '66. To keep perspective on all this, campaign differences among Don, Hale and myself had no effect on the election outcome, were minor (grossly exaggerated) and only symptomatic, and mainly indicate the nonsense fluff of politics.

Fry: Why did you make the decision to come out?

Dutton: One, Pat asked. Two, I liked campaign challenges then. I doubted it was doable, and by October I knew it surely was not.

Dutton: When Bob Kennedy came through California about two or three weeks before the '66 election, he asked me privately, "Fred, how are things going here?"

I said, "Bob, we're going to lose by over 670,000." Only we lost by more than that. He was shocked at the time.

He said, "How can you be working so hard?" which I was (putting in fourteen hours a day),"and really be so totally for Pat and still that cold blooded about the prospect?"

When Bob Kennedy chose me to travel with him and run his road-show in '68, he referred to that and said that was the kind of realism as well as commitment he wanted.

I believe that in politics you've got to throw your whole heart into it, but don't deceive yourself.

A Brown victory probably was never doable in '66, including long before Yorty damaged him in the primary. If a third term was ever doable for Pat, the crucial time was at least a year prior to the election.

Fry: When did you see that it wasn't doable?

Dutton: Within a week or two after I went out, in a weak, unwelcome, but fairly discernible way.

Fry: Was this also, may I ask, a financial loss for you to go out to California?

Dutton: I lost a key legal client here. I had become the Washington representative, in the fall of '65, for the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers--ASCAP. I went out to California and Stanley Adams, who was then head of the group in New York, heard about it and was a little bit grumbly, thinking I should be in Washington, D.C., fulltime. I tried to placate him and was not successful, and they finally went on to another lawyer. [laughs] I must say, the one who brought to his attention the fact that I was in California fulltime [more laughter] was somebody whom I had known for years, and who got the client instead. I later got a modest amount of legal work from someone in California that autumn. But it was short term and run of the mill.

I've never gone into politics for financial rewards. Those are better staying out of campaigns. You go in for--this is overly simple--for the existential experience, the challenge, the excitement, think you can do good, and in this case thinking I had some obligations to Pat.

Contradictory Views of Reagan

Fry: You said that Reagan wasn't the problem, but other people like Unruh and the people you were supposedly working within the campaign. But still there seemed to be not a very consistent goal in campaigning against Reagan. There were a lot of attempts made to connect him with the extremists and the Birch Society.

Dutton: That was the Lerner operation.

Fry: Except Bob Coate wrote a paper on it; Cranston wrote a paper on it, I think, a white paper. Everybody was trying to connect this, and Reagan seemed to be able to just make it have no effect.

Dutton: Yes, I agree. Several reasons, I think. First, in my own opinion in terms of priorities of importance, the negatives the Brown administration had accumulated in public perceptions (which are not necessarily reality, but control politically) loomed larger than Reagan's.

Two, Reagan in his own terms was not plausible as the great dangerous heavy which the Brown campaign tried to paint him. Today people are still trying to paint him as a potential man on a white horse who would take the country far to the right and suppress democratic institutions, et cetera. Unbelievable. He's not that much of a heavyweight: too glib, too easily bored, too superficial, too much a rhetorical communicator, not a real do-er. There are aspects of his personality and intellect, such as it is, which just don't let the ogre charge stick.

A third consideration was--and I don't think this would have a decisive effect, but it was a contributing matter--the Brown campaign would try some issue or ploy, decide from the polls or their own intuitive sense, that it wasn't reversing the tide, so move on to another thing, or they'd try to do several things at one. There was a lack of sustaining approach--too eclectic, start and stop. Even in the negative campaign.

One the one hand, for example, it was trying to paint Reagan as the big black reactionary who would suppress democratic institutions or poor people. On the other hand, it was trying to say he was the B movie actor who was totally ineffective and couldn't do anything. We were aware at the time that the approaches were inconsistent, but there was an attitude, "We have to try everything," instead of "Settle on a focused strategy and stick with it."

It wasn't just the Brown campaign. Cranston and others were contradictorily attacking Reagan from separate political perches of their own. And substantively, extolling liberal records and trying

Dutton: to cope with the conservative backlash in '66. To some extent, in terms of political technique, you often mount different, even contradictory approaches. You get one group with this argument and another group with that argument, and the fact that the two arguments are not all that consistent is indulged. But that must be done under an umbrella of a more coherent strategy.

Fry: Did you try to get the Republicans who in '64 had wanted to support Rockefeller?

Dutton: Yes, there was a real effort pretty early.

Fry: And then in the general campaign to get those who had wanted Christopher?

Dutton: Yes, right after June of '66, there were all kinds of efforts. Harry Lerner, I believe, had been part of the George Christopher mayoralty campaign apparatus and was supposed to have great contacts with George. Pat's brother, Harold, who was a judge in Marin County, was supposed to have great contacts with Christopher. Christopher, as I recall, held off. I'm not sure he ever really embraced Reagan, and he made some critical noises about him in June or July of '66. Those were all being assiduously cultivated behind the scenes.

Part of the problem you had here was that after the Republicans had been so badly clobbered in '64, there was a great desire within their own social groups, as well as political elements, to rally together, to overcome their differences. That was powerfully at work in '66.

Christopher was particularly amenable because he felt that he was so much better than Reagan. He held back. Then Pat had a certain attractiveness for Christopher from being out of San Francisco politics. There were minor rivalries there, but those never were as important as the overlap of interests, friendship and common contacts.

Yes, there was a real effort to get them. But I don't think someone like Christopher or anybody else in California politics is very important individually, except as a symbol of groups and social forces at work. Earl Warren and Hiram Johnson are exceptions. I don't think Christopher's coming out for Pat would have done that much good.

Where were the Rockefeller voters of '64 in '66? They were really trying to define unity and go back to their Republican base. They were trying to put the party with which they had some vague, subliminal feeling, back together again. It's very difficult to

Dutton: try to win them over when they are trying to swim the other way. People easily break away once; but if you have any kind of party affinity, you don't tend to break twice in a row. Or one switches categories, at least to 'independent,' as millions are now. If you break three times in a row, you're a rather rigid convert.

All I'm suggesting is, yes, there were efforts.

No Clear, Simple Focus

Dutton: One of my basic criticisms of the '66 campaign is that so many things were being attempted that there wasn't a clear, simple focus. In Pat's '58 campaign, over a year and a half before the election, I wrote about three or four pages that outlined the whole campaign. The most important part of it was the first page in which I said, "Pat, you've got to settle on two or three qualities of your own personality and beliefs, and just try to make everything you do convey those." We had a highly simplified approach. Some people said we made Pat too simplistic. But in '66 the problem was too much complexity and contradictoriness and trying to appeal to everybody. We had a little bit of something in the mix for everybody, but we had no real core definition with which people could identify.

Fry: Reagan had settled on a simple set of four issues. This is the Totten Anderson and Eugene Lee article. They say that Pat indulged in a gesture of offering to ban these four issues, which the Republicans had found most viable, from the campaign, defined as crime, the courts, the Rumford Act, and the University of California. Do you remember Pat offering to do that with Reagan?

Dutton: No, I do not. What he did do was say the courts, the racial problem, the state university are so important, so fundamental to the life of the state that they should not be dragged into politics. But that is contrary to basic democratic theory; keeping control of our institutions is what elections are all about. I couldn't imagine Reagan giving up his main guns. [laughs] I do recall Pat talking in those other terms.

I thought then, and I think now, there was a great deal of naïvete in that. When the church becomes political, as in Martin Luther's time, it's a part of politics. The idea that it's too important or too precious to be pummeled or criticized is nonsense.

Fry: You mentioned working with Unruh and trying to serve as a bridge between Unruh and the people who were running Pat's campaign. Unruh went to South American or Latin American for most of this campaign and just simply wasn't there. Was this something that you felt was a good thing for him to do under the circumstances?

Dutton: No, Unruh had that all planned and was going to do it anyway.

Fry: Was it to remove himself from the scene?

Dutton: Well, that's a good question. You'd have to ask him that. It was interpreted at the time as that he was going to take a walk. But he was doing it in part to remove himself from controversy and not to be associated with defeat. He already intended to run for governor in 1970. The interpretation at the time was that he was doing it to not be of help. So instead of being a good soldier, he was taking a walk.

Pat was vulnerable about making an argument on that because when Dick Graves ran for governor in 1954, Pat took a trip to Mexico which Jesse was very quick to point out. [laughter]

Fry: Another Democrat, Bob Kenney, did the same thing in '46 when he ran against Earl Warren.

Dutton: So it's--

Fry: --an old California custom. [laughs]

Dutton: Yes. I think that Jesse's going may have been for the best. If he'd stayed there, he'd have made a series of wry or acid comments. He was always quotable. The press liked him and had access to him almost all the time. At least his leaving minimized that.

Fry: Yorty, who had actually come out for Nixon in the earlier campaign, never did support Pat.

Dutton: No, that's correct.

Fry: What efforts were made to neutralize Yorty?

Dutton: Oh, there were attempts to talk to him through various people. I think he and Pat met a couple of times and tried to find common ground. Nothing ever came of it, though. Pat is such an agreeable, likeable person. But he was not good in that kind of situation.

Here again, the Pat Brown of 1966 felt partly that people owed him something for all of his sacrifices being governor and all the headaches and work of it, partly that he had tremendous responsibilities taking care of the state and that people should rally around. Pat was not quite as flexible and responsive as he is now, and as he had been in all other periods of his life. He was very good, but he had gotten a bit imbued with the office. [chuckles] It was very out of character, very out of character for Pat.

Fry: But eight years in that kind of a governorship is bound to have some effect.

Dutton: Yes, I agree.

PR Firms in Politics: Their Usefulness and Limitations

Fry: Do you think it would have helped any if a political PR firm, such as Reagan had Spencer-Roberts, had been assigned to Pat Brown's campaign?

Dutton: Actually, a longtime Republican PR firm, Baus and Ross, was hired, basically through Lerner. Herb Ross worked almost fulltime for Pat. I saw him. I had some contact with him. They had Republican mailing lists, form having run Republican campaigns. They had contacts with local Kiwanis Clubs and similar Republican sources. They were supposedly maximizing whatever Republican vote could be gotten.

As far as your basic question about political PR firms, no, I didn't think so then, and I don't think so now. It is standard in California for Republicans to turn over their campaign that way. I think it works within the Republican part of the political spectrum. You have highly-centralized fundraising for Republican candidates along with the PR approach. It's done like a corporation works.

A Democratic campaign is an attempt to pull together far more diverse populist and activist elements of society, and they just don't fit into that neat a package. A Democratic campaign, I think, is unavoidably a far more untidy kind of exercise.

In addition, while PR operations can do lots of things very well in politics, I don't think they have the ultimate, quintessential skills and art of high-level politics. I think that certain functions can be turned over to them, but not the integrity and policies and basic instincts a top candidate and leader should have. It's not just a question of mass mailings, TV and polling.

There tend to be fads, and you go with a particular thing. If it wins, everybody says, "Boy, that's the solution." PR firms in total control were a GOP fad then. Later TV advisors took center stage. Now a team of specialists prevail with both parties.

A variation on your question which I think is more relevant is, Should Pat have appointed a campaign dictator, let's say Hale or Don or me or somebody else? No, I don't think that would have worked in '66. I had not been in the state long enough and was not that on top of the situation. There were too many animosities between Hale and Unruh, or others. Unruh had unfairly targeted him as the one at fault for the failings in Sacramento. Bradley was very good, but in a particular role less than substantively and political in overall command.

Fry: How did Hale and Bradley get along?

Dutton: Fine. They were different.

##

Dutton: There were no ego problems there. I think they got along well together. They were quite different types of people, and basically each did his own thing.

Fry: So your answer to your own question about needing to centralize campaign authority implies that Pat Brown wasn't enough of a dictator?

Dutton: Yes. In Pat's words, you can't be both a jockey and the horse. [laughter] That's an old Pat Brown expression. There's no reason why a governor should have to be involved with all the minutiae of campaigns: district organization, media spots, advertising layout, hand-holding of local legislative candidates and others, all the essentials and nonsense of campaigns.

Also, Pat didn't have time. Further, he would give the wrong appearance to the public if he got involved in campaign organization that much. Also, that was never terribly Pat's forte. Pat is a great politician, but he was never very good at campaign direction and organization.

Fry: How was Pat on television? This was very much a television campaign, I gather, more than others.

Dutton: Yes. One of my points about the '66 campaign is that Reagan was thought of as a movie star with polish and so forth. As he showed when he became the governor, he was magnificent before a camera and microphone. I used to see him after regents' meetings when he'd go out to the press outside and handle those cameras and reporters with as much poise and control as anyone I ever saw in Washington. But in '66 he was not that great.

There's an interesting theory which I subscribe to, although I'm not sure it's correct. In '66 a conscious decision supposedly was made by Reagan and his staff that he did not want to look like too much the movie actor with too polished a technique. If you go back and look at the campaign TV spots of 1966, they're not of great quality. I would say I think Pat's are a bit better: I'm only talking about camera angles, the quality of the film, things like that. It was almost as though whoever Reagan used either was not adept at putting together TV spots, which I find hard to believe, or had decided that they didn't want to look too polished since he was being accused of being a movie star. They are really, at best, very ordinary if not second-rate spots, as political TV spots go.

- Fry: Pat is criticized for that spot he had in which he said to a little black child, "I'm running against an actor, and you know who shot Lincoln, don't you?" I think Guggenheim Associates gets the credit for that.
- Dutton: He did say it, and it was decided to use it. It couldn't have been more wrong. I think it was politically harmful. It was politically harmful from the time it was first shown. It should never have been said.
- Fry: It was part of a longer thing, as I understand it.
- Dutton: Yes. My recollection--I'm not sure--that incident is illustrative of lots of things in the campaign. Guggenheim was brought in--very, very good. I've worked with him in a number of campaigns, but he was given too much independence. Here again, like you don't give the PR operation independence. You hire the best in the business to make your TV spots, but you still need somebody, let's say a Champion or a Dutton for the judgmental factor.

"A Plane in a Thunderstorm"

- Dutton: Another problem--and this gets too refined, but it's terribly important in campaign matters. Let's say you have your little committee--Bradley, Champion, Dutton--looking at a spot. They'll see the thing, and they'll be trying so hard to get along and not have differences sitting in a TV spot room, so they won't raise objections which they would otherwise or will raise them tepidly. This is part of the price, in my opinion, that people pay when there is not a clearly mandated campaign head. Especially when a candidate has differently oriented top advisors. They either tend to see things differently--or reach a false harmony. At the very top a candidate should not have people that either clash or try to get along so well they muzzle their own critical faculty. Then you really are not getting what you should be getting out of them.

That happened a number of times. Bradley or Hale or I might say, "That's a terrible pamphlet," or "That's a ridiculous speech," but instead of making an issue of it, we'd go along to get along. That's false teamwork.

- Fry: And bad judgment.
- Dutton: Bad judgment, exactly. That was a part of the problem. It was a very poorly put together operation.

Dutton: At the time it was a nightmare. It was like you were sitting on a plane going through a thunderstorm, and you knew it was going to crash or it was going to the wrong airport, and there's not a damn thing you can do about it. You get in campaigns and if you blow your stack or you try to shake things up too much, you're going to get bad stories, unsettle the candidate, and be a part of the problem, not the solution. It comes to the point where you've got to go with the flow in order to not make it worse. That was very much the '66 situation.

Fry: Was there anyone by October who thought you might win?

Dutton: Oh, yes, I think many or most of them. Others thought he had at least an outside chance. I think Hale was pretty much a realist. But most felt they were behind and having problems, a lot of difficulties, "We're going to pull this out." That's one of the chronic faults of political campaigns. Almost everybody's an optimist--a naïve, self-deluding illusionist.

Fry: I think that was the campaign where there was a bumper sticker that said, "Reagan? For governor?" Was this incredibility of Reagan actually being a governor, coming from nowhere in political office, something that pervaded the thinking of the really important decision-makers, that really this couldn't happen?

Dutton: That attitude was common among activists, and I think a lot of voters. But no, there was none of that among the inner group. The closest there was to that were people who had been in Sacramento so long they didn't think that Sacramento could run without them. [laughter]

Fry: What about Robert Scheer and the old CDCers--the reason I say old is because CDC was pretty weak by this time--and the guy who had been kicked out of CDC, Si Casady--what effort was made to get them aboard? They were kind of going off and making their own little new politics over here.

Dutton: Yes, but that initially had been true of the club movement.

Casady, as I recall, was out fairly early. His followers didn't make a big issue of it, didn't object all that much. He wasn't a big news name. He was useful for a few stories. That wasn't a big problem.

The Scheer thing is more interesting. This goes back to Berkeley, the Peace and Freedom Party, which was trying to get started. They didn't have any real votes. At one time, people thought they might make a crucial difference in the election. But they never gained enough numbers, just media hype. What they did show, though, was that the traditional Democratic base in California was splintering.

Dutton: I remember particularly a Ramparts cover of the period. It said, "Tweedledum and Tweedledee, Reagan and Brown," trying in effect to say Pat really didn't matter, that this wasn't an important election, turning off interest, hitting Pat at a point where he had latent vulnerabilities. He wasn't "Tweedledum-Tweedledee" with Reagan.

Another problem we haven't touched on, which is important, is that when you begin to look like you're losing, you get less campaign money than when you're a winner. When you're a likely winner, the money flows in. Actually, money was not that big a problem in '66. We could not claim lack of money as an excuse for losing, but it was harder to get. There was more huffing and puffing for campaign contributions. More of his time was spent on fundraising.

The fundraising picture--even thought well handled by Gene Wyman --was another reflection of trouble, of "probably going to lose."

Fry: There was a debt from '64, I think from the Cranston campaign.

Dutton: Yes, that's correct--which was pretty stupid. Here again, they were not looking ahead enough in '65.

Fry: Then they didn't have the CDC workers like they had before.

Dutton: Yes, the warning signals were everywhere in the landscape.

Fry: I wanted to ask you about another warning signal. During the campaign, did you pick up the fact that both white and blue collar workers and also Catholics, which kind of overlapped and had been two pretty secure groups of support for Pat, were slipping?

Dutton: The polls showed that very clearly--the polls and conventional political analyses of the period.

In terms of winning elections, those are a lot more important than the club movement or its equivalent. Studies of California politics usually focus on something like the club movement on the Democratic side. But they are very incidental compared to the blue collar workers and the Catholic vote in California. Hispanics and the blacks are incrementally important, but they are still less than the working class vote. And there was great defection in that in '66. There was defection over Berkeley, longhairs, law and order, Watts, all kinds of things.

Fry: Proposition 14 on fair housing, from two years before, was still brewing. The courts had just ruled it unconstitutional, but there were still really high feelings about it around the state. People were trying to replace the judges on the state supreme court because of it.

Dutton: It was all part of the unrest that surfaced in California in '63, '64, '65, '66 (it surfaced in the rest of the country later). That caused real anxiety in reaction. Many voters went to Reagan. It was Reagan moving into a vacuum, taking advantage of a situation which was really exterior to him and, less, to Brown.

As you know, the polls at the time and every study we had said the biggest single reactive word in California then was not "blacks" or "Watts" or "Vietnam." It was "Berkeley." Berkeley at that stage meant longhairs, drugs, lack of order or even tidiness, hostility, sit-ins, not just the Free Speech Movement and kids being dragged out of Sproul Hall. "Berkeley" never entirely recognized or accepted that perception.

Fry: Berkeley didn't?

Dutton: By Berkeley I mean the faculty, the academic establishment, the regents at that time. Later on, in the Reagan period, they became overly reactive to the criticism.

But if you look around the country at that time, reaction was setting in, without student troubles yet. As I recall, in New York and other elections, there were police review board proposals, and the whole law and order syndrome and social issue were building. Most of these concerns have a psychological impact and a volatility long before they're simplified into political issues and media phrases. They were very much a part of the environment of the '66 political crisis.

Fry: Yes, it was certainly in the environment around Berkeley.

Dutton: There was especially an hysterical element in the psychology of southern California in the fall of '66. If you look at Reagan's TV spots or a recording of "the speech" he'd often give, it was his Berkeley references which always got the explicit, noisy reaction. For Reagan to mention Berkeley was always a great crowd-gatherer. That was where the cutting edge of emotions were.

Fry: Yes, and he picked that up quickly.

Dutton: Oh, he couldn't avoid it. All he had to do was hear Berkeley mentioned once. Pat, at the end, tried to cope with it and had his criticisms too. But he was very slow and he never pulled it off very plausibly. Pat liked the university; he identified with it. He had been a night law school student and had never gone to university. It was not only that he admired the university, it was something very big that he had missed. He just never, at an intuitive as well as explicit level, handled the Berkeley issue well in '66.

Fry: You were on the University of California Board of Regents then, weren't you?

Dutton: Yes. I had been one of the few people that defended the students. I thought they had over-reacted and had done dumb things. But the demagoguery against young people and a great institution was damaging to them and the state.

In the campaign, nobody made an issue of my being a regent. I thought someone would. When Pat wanted me to come out I said, "Pat, I'm on the board of regents. That's supposed to be a nonpolitical thing. I should stay out." I then offered to resign from the board. I said, "Pat, I don't think I should be in the campaign and on the board." Pat pooh-poohed it and talked me out of it. He has said to me a number of times since then that he was glad, because then in '67, '68, '69, I was one of the main ones carrying the case for the university.

I was always uncomfortable with the fact that I went back into the campaign while still on the board, though it's done fairly often. Bill French ran Reagan's presidential campaign and had a key role in his gubernatorial campaign in '70 when he was on the board. Bill Coblentz has done it. John Francis Neylan did it back in the forties and fifties. Pauley, Carter, now Bill Wilson and most of the board have a quiet or public financial or other political part in campaigns. But it's still something I don't believe in.

Fry: Did anybody pick it up?

Dutton: No, there were one or two brief comments. I got attacked by Nixon in the campaign of '62 by name and by Reagan in '66, but basically no. It was one of those no-go issues. If Reagan mentioned Fred Dutton, the crowd wouldn't know who the hell he is. So after two or three tries you drop it because it's not getting a response [chuckles], which is the way you try out things.

Reagan as a Campaign Target

Fry: There was a story that was circulating around about Reagan then, the fact that he had gotten an unusually large sum for some television commercials that he had just done and that this was really a payment to him for turning over the Actors' Guild to the industry. I wondered why the Democrats never used that?

Dutton: I don't remember that particular story, but both in '66 and '70 they tried to use a whole bunch of stories--his General Electric income, and that he was a conservative because he had been bought as a conservative, that he had gotten a ranch in the mountains in back of L.A. rezoned and sold it at a real killing, and other attempts. One could say they weren't persevered at long enough or weren't simplified well; but they lacked credibility or impact.

Dutton: Pat was never comfortable with the negative stuff, even though he personally brought Lerner in. One of the reasons that he used Lerner for his negative campaigns is that Pat likes everybody basically. He never could bring himself to be a hatchet man or negative about his opponent too much. He'd do it occasionally, but he was not effective about it.

Fry: Yes, I think he usually had some handy--

Dutton: A hatchet man on the side, yes. Lerner was sort of the ultimate one. Cranston tried to be helpful on that in '66. The stuff with Reagan just didn't stick. One can theorize why. My own assumption has always been that voters wanted an alternative to Pat. And voters did not want to believe negatives about Reagan--he was too shallow and affable and elusive. It was not that they liked him particularly or thought he was a great man. But he's a difficult target. And people were looking for an alternative to Watts, Berkeley, a sluggish Sacramento administration, and all kinds of complaints. Then it becomes very tough to tag the opponent with campaign charges.

Fry: As you mentioned, the whole context was the beginning of very great social change.

Dutton: Yes.

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TAPE GUIDE -- Fred Dutton

Interview 1: June 13, 1977

tape 1, side A	1
tape 1, side B	12
tape 2, side A	27

Interview 2: April 15, 1978

tape 3, side A	28
tape 3, side B	39
tape 4, side A	50
tape 4, side B	61
tape 5, side A	71

Interview 4: October 19, 1978

tape 6, side A	81
tape 6, side B	91
tape 7, side A	108
tape 7, side B	119
tape 8, side A	135

Interview 3: August 15, 1978

tape 9, side A	136
tape 9, side B	150
tape 10, side A	163

APPENDIX A-- 1958 Campaign Materials

November 14, 1957

Mr. Fred Dutton
 Attorney General's Office
 State Building
 San Francisco, California

Dear Fred:

from
 This letter will cover ~~three~~ matters in connection with the Brown Campaign that should be borne in mind.

1. Jerry Ets-Hokin is very enthusiastic about Pat and has already talked with certain labor people and his father has debated the right-to-work issue with a prominent Republican importer on television. His father is a very wealthy man of the electrical contracting firm of Ets-Hokin & Galvan. Jerry suggested that Pat should meet with his father and I think that it would be a good idea to have him in a considerably smaller group than the big meeting next Wednesday. However, if Pat were to call him and explain that it was to be a big meeting but asked him any way, I think it would be all right. It would obviously be better if Pat would ask him up to the office on an individual basis.

2. Your use of Democratic Legislators - Fred Farr called me this morning and he had been talking with Stan Arnold; both of them have free rides this year, and both want to help the Brown Campaign. However, Fred felt a little put out at receiving a "mimeographed" invitation to come to a large finance meeting. I don't think they need personal attention from Pat but they do need to be cut into the small campaign committee which we discussed the other night. When I mentioned that to Fred, he was more than satisfied.

Did you see the devastating McDowell story on Santa Barbara where Knowland and the state leadership insulted the Republican legislators? It was in Monday's Call-Bulletin - November 11th. This is something that I regard as one of our greatest assets and certainly these people should be cultivated in every way possible.

Based on Fred's reaction, I would suggest personal letters to every Democratic legislator in Northern California, inviting them to meet with Pat, and the same for Southern California.

Mr. Fred Dutton
November 14, 1957
Page Two

Then we could pick out key ones from time to time and bring them into our Campaign Committee.

3. Dick Graves is convinced that things are running strongly our way but is of the opinion that the campaign has got to be well handled. He feels that after the primary, we should pick up Knight's comment about Knowland, "a belligerent, grim, unfriendly man." He thinks that we can say that this is the man who wanted to declare war on Red China and that his first act in opening his campaign was to declare war on organized labor.

We all see the Knowland strategy which is to throw away the labor union vote which he can't get anyway, and play for an under-dog position as one who "has been marked for liquidation by the labor leaders." Dick thinks, and I agree with him, that we might be able to switch this around to his having attacked labor in the first instance and that their reaction is a natural and a normal one.

4. I had a long talk with Neil Haggerty the day before yesterday and told him that in my view it was going to be up to the State Federation and C.I.O. leadership to educate and indoctrinate their people in the real meaning of "right-to-work." I said that I thought they should have a box on the first page of every union paper in the state from now until next November plus circulars and pamphlets which would clearly and simply state the objectives of Knowland's program. The majority of the press and weeklies are going to take the Knowland integrity and honesty plug and union members are going to be exposed to that in their ordinary reading. Haggerty agreed and said they had already ordered a million and a half folders and had received orders from unions for a million and a quarter. C.I.O. is of course doing likewise and John Despol has asked permission to use our Northern California plates (16,000), on a pay basis, to send out their message.

I asked Haggerty what concrete proposals he had to channel the views of labor leaders effectively in the Brown campaign. He said he thought it was a little early to form a labor committee and that he thought the program would fall into place. I am willing to go along with him for a couple of months but then

Mr. Fred Dutton
November 14, 1957
Page Two

think we should really set this up right and see that they do the things which they can certainly do more effectively than anyone else. I asked if posters, mats and biographical material on Brown would be distributed if received and he said that would be helpful and that it would be used. I would suggest sending him over a sample batch of material and asking what items he could use in larger quantities.

Very best.

Yours,

Roger Kent

RK:mf

bcc: Mrs. Elizabeth Smith



CALIFORNIA CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

256 SUTTER STREET • SAN FRANCISCO 8, CALIF.

Telephone: YUkon 2-9080

FREDERICK G. DUTTON
State Campaign Director

179

RICHARD G. TUCK
1/16/58

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Attorney General Edmund G. Brown today, January 16, 1958, strongly urged public development of power resources on the Trinity River project and declared himself opposed to turning over construction of the power features of the project to the Pacific Gas & Electric Co.

Brown spelled out his position in a statement prepared for a luncheon meeting in his honor at Tulare, California called by District Attorney Robert Hayden of Tulare County.

Brown's statement was made on the eve of hearings in Washington, D. C., Monday, January 20 before a subcommittee of the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives. The chairman of the subcommittee is Congressman Wayne Aspinall (Dem - Colorado).

Following is a by Attorney General Brown:

"Secretary of the Interior Seaton's recommendation that power features for the Trinity River Project should be constructed by the Pacific Gas and Electric Company should receive a cold-blooded analysis of its effect on the power bills of the people of California. I think such an analysis will show that the proposal is not in the public interest and is contrary to well-established policies written into the Federal Reclamation Law for the past 50 years.

"Secretary Seaton justifies his endorsement of PG & E's

Statement by Edmund G. Brown (con't)

proposal on the ground that it would create a surplus of \$165 million dollars in the Federal treasury. Almost half of this surplus would come from charging the Federal agencies more for their power. (The report says Federal preference agencies would pay approximately \$71 million dollars more for power during the payout period.) A relatively small increase in Central Valley power rates would easily amount to the same surplus and CVP power rates would still be far below PG & E rates for comparable service.

"If making money is the objective of the Trinity development rather than proper resource development, then the Government should change its policy to charge all the traffic will bear and then they could make far more money than selling it to PG & E.

"This 'banker's approach' has been opposed for generations, including federal leaders in the Teddy Roosevelt-Gifford Pinchot era. People should not forget that the water power resources belong to the people.

"The whole State, particularly Northern California, benefits by selling Central Valley Project power to public agencies. Since 1932, the effectiveness of a public power yardstick has been recognized as a means of keeping power rates down and the use of power high.

"It should be born in mind that the Central Valley power is not one great monopoly, but the Government sells power wholesale to locally owned and operated utilities. The difficulty of reducing rates is a basic defect of monopoly regulation. Without the pressure of competition which is now afforded by public agencies, monopoly fosters high costs. Regulation is not a substitute for competition. Central Valley power rates have had a desirable effect in keeping PG & E's rates lower in Northern California, including the San Francisco area. "

"We should have no fear that the Government will take over all the power facilities. PG & E has one steam plant at Pittsburg with a capacity greater than the four Federal power plants in Northern California (660,000 kilowatts to

Statement by Edmund G. Brown (con't)

be increased with two units of 325,000 kilowatts each in the future) -- Shasta-Keswick capacity, 450,000; Folsom-Nimbus capacity, 173,500; total 623,500.

I also want to make clear that the State itself has a stake in federal development of the Trinity Power. The State's Feather River Project can only produce 20% of the electric energy needed for water pumping. The rest will have to be purchased or procured from other sources. As a public agency the State qualified as a preferred customer of the Federally owned CVP,. With Trinity Power produced by a federal agency, the State will be able to obtain substantial amounts of power at prices which it cannot hope to duplicate elsewhere. This has a direct and important bearing on the cost of water to be made available by the Feather River Project.

"It is my hope that Seaton 's recommendation can be quickly disposed of, so Federal construction of Trinity River power plants can proceed as fast as possible. We need both Federal and private power development to meet California's growing needs."

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APPENDIX B-- Brief Account of Dutton Activities
After 1966

July 9, 1981

MEMORANDUM TO: Amelia Frey
FROM: Fred Dutton ^{JD}
SUBJECT: Oral History

1. Relations with Pat Brown after 1966: I, since then, have seen Pat several times a year in Washington or California, generally at small, private dinners where we discussed current developments and gave only a passing nod to past events. Both he and I are, by temperament, much more oriented towards immediacy and 'prospective-ness' than the past. Pat has kept me up-to-date on his activities, sought my counsel on both private business matters and his public activities, and kept me well abreast of his family developments. I have not been involved in his son's gubernatorial campaigns or period in office, although he calls every month to six weeks for an extended discussion of state or national developments; and I have seen him on a number of occasions in Washington and California.

2. Involvement in the Public Sector in California since 1966: I served as a member of the University of California Board of Regents from 1962 to 1976, with most of that thus after Pat left the Governor's Office. I was one of the two or three principal figures in the so-called 'liberal bloc' on the Board and probably considered the leader of the opposition to then-Governor Reagan on University matters from 1967 until 1974 -- the end of his second term. Most of the really controversial issues, however, were generated during his first term. With William Roth, Norton Simon and William Coblentz (and a changing mix of other Regents), we took different positions from Governor Reagan on a number of problems. I took the initiative in opposition to the imposition of a tuition charge at the University. We won the fight on the first round but lost when the Governor lowered the amount, changed the label, and agreed to allocate roughly half of it directly to educational purposes. With Simon, Roth and others, I was a spokesman on behalf of so-called academic independence, particularly as to the faculty having the right to appraise and hire special instructors. That came to a head in the Angela Davis case; Reagan, William French Smith and others spearheaded the group which ultimately prevailed over our position and that of the faculty and University Administration.

Another issue which was fought during that period was maintaining adequate state financial support for the University, with that issue first fought in the Board and then in the state legislature (as well as the public media). Reagan imposed some fiscal cut-backs but actually tended to win headlines more than the actual budget issue over a period of time. A number of his own key supporters, as Smith and Carter, tended to come around to a compromise position, as did the State legislature, media and public opinion in the state.

Another major and protracted controversy was over student conduct and regulations as those came to a head over the anti-Vietnam demonstrations and the Governor calling in the National Guard to police the Berkeley campus; that controversy ended not really satisfactory from anyone's viewpoint.

Background struggles on the Board of Regents in this period included the liberal bloc resisting attempts by some of the more conservative Regents privately to investigate and screen faculty promotions through use of un-American activities files of veterans' organizations and other sources. Another protracted debate occurred over University support (or subsidization, as charged) of research benefiting primarily corporate farming in the state, including even when that adversely affected field workers, the quality of crops produced and other factors. Still another drawn out controversy concerned University operation of the Livermore and Los Alamos laboratories which develop and manufacture all U.S. nuclear weapons, with the so-called liberals, student leadership and some faculty arrayed in opposition to the Reagan group, the University Administration and key sectors of the faculty. Another long drawn out controversy in this period was over investment of the University's several billion dollar portfolio in corporations active in South Africa; and a number of other matters.

In retrospect, I believe that the University was explicitly politicized very heavily by the Governor and his key supporters on the Board in this period but also, unfortunately, by the vigor of the opposition which had to be mounted to blunt, even though not really prevail, in the situation. Perspective requires recognition that a state university is somewhat politicized in an implicit way almost by its existence. Certainly that has been true in the history of the University of California, as in the loyalty oath fight and earlier struggles, including even underlying role of providing a skilled and sophisticated human work force for the new economy of California over the past hundred years. The University continues to stand as one of the great ones in the world and in the U.S.; and the damage done by the politization needs to be kept in balance with the institutional inertia which exists in a maturing system of higher education. That has been aggravated by the cumbersome administrative super structure which has developed in the last quarter of a century. The role of opposition which the handful of liberal Regents had in this period was probably as critical of those institutional problems as was the Reagan group. To a considerable extent, the Reagan and liberal perception 'joined' in seeking a critical re-examination, as has the subsequent Governor. But from this still fairly early vantage point, institutional inertia seems to be prevailing over the diverse critiques.

3. As far as my own personal activities after 1966, they can be summarized fairly well as follows:

(a) 1967 - 1969 -- Spent largely writing a book Changing Sources of Power, published in 1970-'71, and practicing law. I spent the first half of 1968 as the chief one in charge of Robert Kennedy's Presidential Campaign as he traveled around the U.S.; the second half was spent partly in the practice of law and partly traveling with Hubert Humphrey in his unsuccessful campaign against Nixon.

(b) 1970 and the first half of 1971 -- Spent practicing law, with some time taken from that to help Arthur Goldberg in his gubernatorial campaign in New York and Norton Simon in his Senate campaign in California attempting to insure the defeat of the incumbent Senator, George Murphy, as was accomplished. Lived in Paris and London the first half of 1971 and 1972.

(c) 1973 - 1974 -- Practiced law in Washington, D.C. Much of time on 1st Amendment problems plus general corporate work.

(d) 1975 - Present -- Largely the same with primary client being the government of Saudi Arabia.

FGD/aj

INDEX -- Frederick G. Dutton

- Abbott, Jack, 59
 Ahmanson, Howard, 129-130
 Alarcon, Arthur, 115
 Anderson, Glenn, 25, 30, 85
 Anderson, Totten, 79, 81, 93, 145
 appointments, gubernatorial, 87, 98, 140
 Arvey, Jake, 50
- Bassett, Bill, 91
 Baus and Ross, campaign management, 162
 Beck, Julian, 103
 Behrens, Earl, 43, 84, 88
 Bergholz, Richard, 74
 blacks. See Negroes
 Blair, Paul, 34
 Bradley, Don, 29-30, 59-60, 73, 75-76, 88-90, 139, 151-164 passim
 Brody, Ralph, 104, 135
Brown v. Board of Education, 57-58
 Brown, Bernice (Mrs. Edmund G. Brown, Sr.), 42, 109-114, 117-118, 120
 Brown, Edmund G., Jr. (Jerry), 12, 109, 116, 118, 120
 Brown, Edmund G., Sr. (Pat), 2, 5, 24-43, 49, 52-54, 56-59, 66-69, 70-87, 92-94, 97-98, 101-169, passim
 Brown, Harold, 159
 Burch, Meredith, 26, 90, 128
 Burns, Hugh, 102-105
 Burton, Phil, 79, 88-89, 93
 Butler, Paul, 70
- Caen, Herb, 107
 California Democratic Council, 35-38, 73, 82-85, 88, 94, 97, 130-131, 165-166
 California Newspaper Publisher's Association, 123
 California
 politics, 31-32, 81-82, 86-105, 129, 131, 135, 153-156
 capital punishment, 116, 119-122, 144. See also Chessman case
 Carter, Ed, 110-112, 131, 168
 Casady, Si, 165
 Champion, Hale, 75, 95, 106, 114-115, 118, 120, 136, 138-139, 142, 151, 153, 155-156, 162-165 passim
 Chavez, Cesar, 9-10, 144
 Chessman case, 41-42, 104, 107, 116-123, 150-151
 Christian, Winslow, 115

Christopher, George, 126, 132, 159
 Christopher, Warren, 19, 128-129
 Coate, Robert, 158
 Coblentz, William, 168
 Cranston, Alan, 35, 59, 73, 82, 96, 158, 169

Democratic party (California)
 State Central Committee, 69-70
 See also California Democratic Council
 Democrats, New Deal, 3-5
 deSilva, Joseph, 44, 50
 Despol, Johnny, 44, 50, 59, 91
 Dollars for Democrats, 70-71
 Douglas, Helen Gahagan, 40, 51
 Dutton, Edward, 9-10
 Dutton, Frederick G., Sr., 1-6, 8-9, 14
 Dutton, Lucy Elizabeth Parker, 1-4, 9

Eisenhower, Dwight D., 4, 74, 76-78, 132
 election campaigns, California
 1954 gubernatorial, 25-27
 1958 gubernatorial, 31-32, 81-96, 109-112, 124-135
 1966 gubernatorial, 136-143, 148, 150-169
 election campaigns, national
 1952 presidential, 23-24, 42
 1956 presidential, 25-26, 29-31, 33-41, 45-51, 57-61, 69-80 passim, 90, 93, 132
 1956 vice presidential, 56, 68, 156-159
 1958 senatorial, 42-43, 96-97
 1964 presidential, 38, 57-58, 132, 136, 150
 1968 presidential, 56, 68, 156-159
 Engle, Clair, 29, 43, 56, 68, 72, 96-97

Farr, Fred S., 93
 Finnegan, Jim, 39, 69
 Ford, John Anson, 25, 30
 French, William, 168
Fresno Bee, 135

Galbraith, John Kenneth, 47
 Garibaldi, James D., 99
 Gatov, Elizabeth Smith, 29, 59, 60, 62-63, 88-89
 Gibson, Phil, 116-117
 Graves, Richard, 25, 54, 82, 161
 Greenburg, Carl, 74
 Guggenheim Associates, 164

Haggerty, Cornelius J., 44, 91
 Hansen, Ken, 22
 Harris, Lou, 127
 Hawkins, Gus, 40-41, 92
 Hayden, Bob, 134
 Heller, Edward, 49-50, 90-91
 Heller, Elinor (Mrs. Edward), 65
 Henning, Jack, 91
 Holifield, Chet, 56, 67-68
 Humphrey, Hubert, 64-65

Johnson, Hiram, 32, 54, 82, 159
 Johnson, Lyndon B., 38, 50, 105, 147-150
 Jones, Walter, 135

Keck, Bill, 98-99
 Keene, James, 75, 132
 Kefauver, Estes, 26, 36, 41, 45-46, 53, 64-65, 76, 77
 Kennedy, John F., 2, 11, 50, 64-67, 76, 105, 108, 150
 Kennedy, Robert, 2, 66, 149, 150, 156-157
 Kent, Roger, 29, 38, 59, 60, 63, 84-89 passim, 93
 Kerr, Clark, 146
 Kline, Richard, 152
 Knight, Goodwin J., 25, 29, 31, 32, 42-43, 82, 83-84, 86, 97-98, 109, 110, 122, 124, 125-126, 129, 135
 Knowland, Joseph R., 124
 Knowland, William, 43, 82, 83-84, 110, 123-126, 128, 129, 135, 142
 Kuchel, Thomas, 32

Lee, Gene, 129, 145
 Lerner, Harry, 84, 98-99, 152, 158, 159, 169
 Loring, Charles, 126
Los Angeles Examiner, 32, 74, 113, 121
Los Angeles Times, 23, 24, 28, 32, 33, 37, 54, 74, 81, 82, 84, 135
 Lynch, Tom, 86, 106, 118

McConnell, F. Britton, 102-103
 McDonald, Dave, 127
 McEnery, Joseph, 44
 McGovern Commission, 61-62
 McGowan, Carl, 24
 Mackin, Frank, 28, 86, 98
 Makino, Ernie, 15
 Mansfield, Mike, 48-49, 71

Martin, John Bartlow, 47
 Miller, George, Jr., 72-73, 100, 102, 105
 Miller, Joe, 127
 Montezuma School for Boys, 1-7 passim, 11, 15
 Mosk, Stanley, 117, 131
 Moss, John, 60

Negroes, in politics, 39-41, 90
 Negro issues in, 94-96
 Newsom, Bill, 86
 newspapers, political influence of, 32, 35, 74-75, 84, 107, 113, 121, 123,
 135, 146, 155-156
 Neylan, John Francis, 168
 Nixon, Richard M., 63, 68, 77, 125, 132, 138, 142, 168
 nuclear arms issue, 76

O'Brien, Larry, 65
 O'Connor, William V., 28, 42, 86
 O'Donnell, Kenneth, 65, 66
 Olson, Culbert, 29, 82, 109, 117
 opinion polls, 126-127

Pacific Gas and Electric Co., 135
 pacifism, 14-15, 16, 22
 Palmer, Kyle, 43, 84, 88
 Pauley, Edwin, 42, 48, 67, 71, 110-112, 114, 131, 168
 Peace and Freedom party, 165-166
 politics
 Jewish community in, 48-50
 media and, 32, 46-47, 132-135, 153, 155-156, 163
 movie industry and, 154
 Negroes and Negro issues in, 39-41, 62, 90, 92, 94-96
 oil interests in, 98-101
 opinion polls and, 126-127
 PR firms in, 162-164
 and the public good, 143-151
 women in, 62-63
 and zoning, 154
 Poole, Cecil, 118, 120, 122

Reagan, Ronald, 9-10, 12, 132, 137, 138, 142, 146, 152, 153, 156-169 passim
 Republican party (California), 128, 162
 Big Switch (1958), 124, 126
 Richards, Richard, 30, 37, 44, 57, 63

Rockefeller, Nelson, 159
 Roosevelt, James, 25, 57, 73
 Rosenthal, William, 25, 30
 Ross, Herb, 162
 Roth, William Matson, 49-50, 59, 90
 Rumford, William Byron, 60, 92

Sacramento Bee, 135
 Samish, Artie, 115
San Francisco Chronicle, 1, 37, 75, 84, 107
San Francisco Examiner, 146, 155-156
 Saussett, Adrienne, 122
 savings and loan industry, 129-130
 Savio, Mario, 3, 12
 Scheer, Robert, 165
 Schlesinger, Arthur, Jr., 25, 33, 47
 Shults, Al, 99
 Schuman, Adolph, 49
 Shirpser, Clara, 53
 Shorenstein, Walter, 49
 Smith, Libby. See Gatov, Elizabeth
 Snyder, Elizabeth, 30, 44, 52, 57, 59, 60, 62
 Spaeth, Carl, 19
 Spencer-Roberts Co., 142, 162
 Stevenson, Adlai, 23-27, 29, 30, 33-38 passim, 45-51, 64, 66, 71, 73-78
passim, 132
 Suez crisis, 1962, 76-77
 Swig, Ben, 49-50, 90-91

Teale, Stephen, 103
 Truman, Harry S., 112
 Tuck, Dick, 26, 69, 90, 118, 133

University of California, 2, 3, 9, 12-14, 17-18
 Board of Regents, 10, 136, 168
 student unrest at, 145-146
 University of California, Berkeley
 Free Speech Movement, 145-146, 169
 Unruh, Jesse, 85-86, 102, 105, 106, 129, 138, 140, 151, 152-153, 160-161, 162

Vietnam War, 17, 145, 146-150

- Warren, Earl, 28, 29, 31, 32, 54, 76, 81, 86, 91, 97-98, 115-116, 118, 122
 124, 135, 159
 Warschaw, Carmen, 140, 151-155 passim
 water
 California Water Plan, 101-104
 Watts riots, 144-146 passim
 Webb, U.S., 42, 110
 Wedemeyer, John M., 147-148
 Wilson, William A., 168
 women in politics, 62-63
 Wyman, Gene, 140, 151, 166
- Yorty, Samuel, 37, 43, 44, 67, 136, 138, 140, 142, 157, 161
 Younger, Evelle, 154
- Ziffren, Paul, 30, 51-52, 54, 59, 79, 84, 86

Amelia R. Fry

Graduated from the University of Oklahoma, B.A. in psychology and English, M.A. in educational psychology and English, University of Illinois; additional work, University of Chicago, California State University at Hayward.

Instructor, freshman English at University of Illinois and at Hiram College. Reporter, suburban daily newspaper, 1966-67.

Interviewer, Regional Oral History Office, 1959--; conducted interview series on University history, woman suffrage, the history of conservation and forestry, public administration and politics. Director, Earl Warren Era Oral History Project, documenting governmental/political history of California 1925-1953; director, Goodwin Knight-Edmund G. Brown Era Project.

Author of articles in professional and popular journals; instructor, summer Oral History Institute, University of Vermont, 1975, 1976, and oral history workshops for Oral History Association and historical agencies; consultant to other oral history projects; oral history editor, Journal of Library History, 1969-1974; secretary, the Oral History Association, 1970-1973.

